

A History of Illinois Congregational and Christian Churches

MATTHEW SPINKA

Editor

in collaboration with

FREDERICK KUHN

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HERMANN R. MUELDER


WARREN E. THOMPSON



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PREFACE

This work, a first attempt to present a comprehensive survey of the history of Congregational and Christian churches in Illinois from their inception to date, is published in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of the organization of the General Association of Illinois in 1844. The Centennial Committee, having decided upon the publication of a commemorative volume, honored me by entrusting the preparation of the work to my care. In turn, I secured a number of collaborators specially qualified for their assignments by training and experience. I take this opportunity to express my genuine and sincere appreciation and thanks to these contributors, without whose aid the project as a whole could not have been carried to completion.

First of all, I wish to thank the Rev. Frederick Kuhns of Chicago who not only contributed the first three chapters, but also prepared the Index. His painstaking and scholarly research in primary sources brought to light for the first time many important aspects of the story of Congregationalism in Illinois which have hitherto either escaped the attention of the previous students of the subject altogether, or have been insufficiently, if not inaccurately, treated. This is particularly true of his recovery of the role played by the Rock River Association whose very existence has often been ignored by previous writers. The map on p. 64, drawn by him, is the result of his painstaking research. He has likewise read the whole work in proof and has suggested many improvements and corrections.

Furthermore, I wish to express my appreciation to Professor Winthrop S. Hudson of the Colgate-Rochester Theological Seminary, who had worked on this same assignment before Mr. Kuhns took it over. Dr. Hudson was unable to complete the work because of his removal from Chicago.

Professor Hermann R. Muelder of Knox College, Galesburg, Ill., has earned for himself, by his publications dealing with the history of the state, recognition as an authority in this field. He has contributed two chapters to this volume. It gives me pleasure to acknowledge both the value of his contribution, and his unfailing readiness to cooperate in the project even under these difficult war-time conditions of speeded-up educational programs.

No better qualified writer on the contribution of women to the work of Illinois Congregationalism could be found than Mrs. Ozora S. Davis, the widow of the former beloved President of the Chicago Theological Seminary, an ardent and prominent leader in Congregational women's movements, and an ex-president of the Chicago Woman's Club. It was thought eminently fitting that the contribution of women should be specially recognized, and this was done most satisfactorily by Mrs. Davis. She has my genuine gratitude.

Finally, the dominant position and the distinguished services of the Chicago Congregational Union likewise was acknowledged as deserving of special treatment. Mr. Warren E. Thompson was chosen for this task, with my hearty approval, by the officials of the Union, and has performed it with competence, skill, and fairness. It is a pleasure to acknowledge his services.

I have greatly regretted that despite my long-sustained efforts, I failed to secure, for the chapter dealing with the history of the Christian churches, a person whose antecedents connected him personally with that denomination. In the end, I found it necessary to undertake the task myself. But an appalling dearth of source materials made an adequate treatment of the subject impossible. I regret that for that reason the treatment of the history of the Christian churches could not be made commensurate with that of the Congregational churches. In this connection I wish to acknowledge my ap-

preciation of the aid rendered me by the Rev. Shirley E. Greene of Merom (Ind.) Institute, who allowed me to make use of his unpublished study dealing with the Christian churches of Illinois.

Besides to the writers themselves, sincere thanks are due to the library staffs of colleges and seminaries who gave essential help either in supplying information or valuable materials. Among these, the first place must be given to Miss Evah Ostrander, Librarian of the Chicago Theological Seminary, whose patient, never failing kindness to and cooperation with all the contributors to the volume is beyond all praise. She has made available to them without stint the riches of the Hammond Library which exceed in volume and value all the rest of the repositories of such sources, and has generously rendered all of them kindly services without which their work would have been greatly impeded. Similarly high praise is due to Prof. Samuel C. Kincheloe of the Chicago Theological Seminary and his staff, for the preparation of the chart included in the volume, and the use of his unpublished materials bearing upon the sociological aspects of modern Illinois Congregationalism. Furthermore, among others may be mentioned Beloit College, Chicago Historical Society, Illinois College, Illinois State Historical Society, Missionary Research Library at Union Theological Seminary (New York City), Newberry Library, Oberlin College, Oregon (Ill.) Public Library, Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Rockford Public Library, University of Chicago, Western Reserve Historical Society, Western Reserve University, and Wisconsin State Historical Society.

In addition, I wish to acknowledge with gratitude the valuable aid given by scores of church clerks and pastors, and conference officials both in Illinois, Indiana and elsewhere. In this connection I cannot forbear to mention particularly Mr. Orman L. Shott, Secretary of the Illinois Conference, who

very kindly allowed me to make use of the unpublished minutes of the various governing boards of the Conference.

My special and very sincere thanks are hereby extended to my friend, the Rev. Cyrus A. Osborne, the honored Registrar of the Chicago Congregational Association. He has not only generously supplied me with information derived from the official minutes of the Association, but has read and revised the manuscript of Chapter X. I have incorporated into the text some sections supplied by him almost verbatim, in which case his authorship is explicitly acknowledged in footnotes. But in quite a number of other instances I have made use of the material furnished by him as the basis of my own treatment. For all such direct aid, as well as his unfailingly friendly encouragement, I take great pleasure in giving him my thanks.

Matthew Spinka

The Hartford Theological Seminary,
January 9, 1944

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CHAPTER I

EARLY MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

When Congress set off the Territory of Illinois from that of Indiana in 1809,¹ no Congregational ministers had arrived and no Congregational churches had been planted in this wilderness, though the religious condition of the Southern pioneers, who formed what tiny and isolated settlements there were, was one of great destitution.²

To be sure, Congregationalists in New England were looking in the direction of the Old Northwest; but nothing like the tremendous home missionary movement of twenty years later had in that day been imagined. The Missionary Society of Connecticut expended the largest proportion of its energies in bringing the means of grace to frontiersmen in the Western Reserve; the Massachusetts Missionary Society (and the Presbyterian General Assembly also) sent a few workers into the Old Northwest, though none had been sent to the Illinois Territory.

In the period following the Revolutionary War, the churches, colleges and seminaries of New England were struggling to throw off the handicap of a weakened religious condition, but were now happily experiencing a spiritual revival which, in turn, aroused an unprecedented interest in missions.³ In 1806 several Williams College students proposed the objective of Christian service in foreign lands;⁴ one of the richest outgrowths of this new ferment was the Society of Inquiry on the Subject of Missions. Organized in 1811 by Samuel John Mills and other students in Andover Theological In-

stitution,⁵ this became the seed plot of a corps of missionaries, many of whom rendered service in Illinois.

Within a few days of the outbreak of war, Samuel Mills and John F. Schermerhorn, a fellow member of the Society of Inquiry, audaciously struck out for the West, and in 1812-1813 cut open a vast region.⁶ Vivid accounts reached the East of the spiritual destitution these explorers had found.⁷ In the rapidly settling Territory of Indiana, for example, they found only one Presbyterian minister; in the Illinois Territory there was "not a solitary Presbyterian minister, though there (were) several families of this denomination in different settlements." "We must send missionaries," they argued, "while the settlements are forming." As a result, consciences were aroused and moral activities were accelerated.

Later Mills undertook another journey, and once again the Society of Inquiry was drawn upon for a companion, Daniel Smith.⁸ In the summer of 1814, these pathfinders rode from Philadelphia to Vincennes, in the Territory of Indiana, carrying hundreds of Bibles (some French) and thousands of tracts for distribution, and quickly followed this up with effective visits at Shawneetown, Kaskaskia, Prairie du Rocher, and St. Louis. At Kaskaskia, the territorial capital of Illinois, where (as at other points) they formed a Bible reading society, Governor Edwards co-operated; at Prairie du Rocher a supply of French Testaments was distributed with the approval of the Roman Catholic bishop. (These were later burned under the same auspices.)⁹

Mills' lively imagination, the passion to serve, and the urgency of unconventional plans conceived by him and his associates were an inspiration without parallel. These extraordinary labors in the wilderness led to the formation of new benevolent institutions,¹⁰ and challenged Congregational and Presbyterian missions on a larger scale.

The restless spirit of the founder surged forward in the

Society of Inquiry and laid hold of Salmon Giddings, who came, in 1815, to Missouri for the Missionary Society of Connecticut.¹¹ Unaware that he was soon to be joined by an associate, Giddings at St. Louis had all but despaired of his prospects; indeed, he had just abandoned his mission when Timothy Flint arrived bringing fresh hope.¹² Flint, a Harvard man, had relinquished the pastorate of the Congregational church at Lunenburg, Massachusetts, to come West for the Missionary Society of Connecticut in the summer of 1815. After wintering near Cincinnati, he requested to be transferred to Illinois. Arriving at St. Louis, he put in a busy summer before removing to St. Charles where he labored two years, although he organized no churches. Upon Flint's departure, Giddings returned to St. Louis and served there until his death in 1828. Dividing his time between the territories of Missouri and Illinois, he organized the First Presbyterian Church of St. Louis in 1817; in the same year, with Flint and two Presbyterian ministers, John Mathews and Thomas Donnell, he formed the Presbytery of Missouri in connection with the Synod of Tennessee. All told, Giddings and the group of missionaries associated with him (all sent by the Missionary Society of Connecticut) organized seventeen Presbyterian churches previous to 1828, when Giddings reported. The more important of these churches in Illinois were at Kaskaskia, Edwardsville, Belleville, and Collinsville.¹³

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, through its Standing Committee on Missions, acknowledged an interest in Illinois, but its expression meanwhile lacked concentrated impact. Missionary tours lasting a few months, made by preachers from Kentucky, like the revivalist, James McGready, and from Tennessee, like Gideon Blackburn, the well-known apostle to the Indians, were features of the earliest years; a few itinerant workers sent by the Assembly's Board of Missions, which was constituted in 1816 as a result of the Mills

tours, enlarged the activities of the denomination. As late as 1825, however, only three men were under appointment in Illinois, though there were four in Missouri.¹⁴

Clearly, the extension of Presbyterian faith and order in Illinois was the self-assigned task of the Missionary Society of Connecticut. From 1815 to 1826 this Congregational body sent a succession of itinerant ministers into southern Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, whose labors resulted in the formation of a number of Presbyterian churches.¹⁵ The students and graduates of Andover Seminary who formed this vanguard were Congregationalists and Presbyterians to an equal number. Yet all worked shoulder to shoulder in scrupulous observance of the Plan of Union¹⁶ existing between the General Association of Connecticut and the General Assembly. Shrewd churchmen that they were, the Congregationalists neither shied away from the Plan of Union nor considered it unbearable. Rather, they deemed it a most efficient implement for church extension. As to the question of polity, the Missionary Society of Connecticut was not indifferent to it, and on the whole favored the establishment of Presbyterianism. Where no other agency elected to expend its energies, the Missionary Society of Connecticut, in a truly non-denominational spirit, forced back the wilderness and blazed fresh trails for succeeding missionary bands.¹⁷ Nevertheless, years of itinerancy brought stern reminders that more efficient measures were demanded if Christian institutions were to be firmly established.

Approximately coincident in time with readjustments of the nation's boundaries, the frontiers of Illinois were defined for her admission to the Union. Her population, approaching 40,000, was rapidly growing, though by no means as rapidly as that of her neighbors, Indiana and Missouri.¹⁸ While the southern third of the state was being settled ever more densely, the northern section lagged far behind; on the one hand, the reluctance of the Indians to come to terms with the govern-

ment,¹⁹ and on the other hand, the inability of the settlers to buy the public lands under the prevailing system of sales,²⁰ were major factors retarding settlement in the north. The squatter, the speculator, and the government itself contested every square rod of the domain.²¹ The Military Tract especially became the prey of the speculator.²² Fort Dearborn at Chicago, Fort Armstrong at Rock Island, and Fort Clark at Peoria, were the slenderest of defenses behind which the white man reared his new order. By 1823, the region about Galena, rich in lead, was attracting thousands of miners from the southern part of the state and even from beyond; but Aratus Kent, the first Presbyterian minister in that sector containing 10,000 people, did not arrive on the scene until April, 1829.²³ Following the War of 1812, as tremendous movements of population surged into the Old Northwest, Illinois was teeming with life.²⁴ By 1825, when her population numbered 72,817, the northern counties of Morgan, Pike, Sangamon, Schuyler, Tazewell, and Peoria were gaining incredibly. Technically ranked as a free state,²⁵ Illinois protected slavery under the indenture system. Religious forces were alert and battled this evil to a standstill. Thomas Lippincott, a Presbyterian elder and contributing editor of the *Edwardsville Spectator*, and Stephen Bliss, since 1819 a Presbyterian Sunday School worker in the southeastern portion opposite Vincennes, were among those of several religious communions who sounded the tocsin in 1824, when the pro-slavery forces were advocating a convention for the purpose of altering the Constitution.²⁶

The continuous and gallant efforts expended by Eastern missionary societies to keep pace with the settlement of the Old Northwest, were inadequate in proportion to its amazing growth from 50,000 in 1800 to 1,500,000 by 1830. Hand in hand with this increase in population went economic and political developments. Thanks to improving transportation, especially the steam-

boat, the hunger for better land, the thirst for new experience, the lure of a free country, the refuge from slavery, and the ever-rising demand for labor of every kind, a transformation from wilderness to civilization was swiftly taking place. There was something urgent in this swift growth to the ambassadors of a Christian culture who were determined to transplant the institutions which had blessed the East with piety and learning before the West should threaten their integrity.²⁷ People generally were too busy and too indifferent to heed the arrival of Sabbath. There were no church spires to catch the eye and remind one of destiny. No bells announced the concourse of the soul with the Creator. The restraints of religion, from which many sought escape, were not obligingly assumed. It was crucially important for settlers to build their cabins, to break and fence their lands, to plant, harvest, and market their crops. Trade also required their time. Stores must perforce be open on Sundays. Amusements were coarse, and, in the eyes of Easterners, were of Satan's devising. The circus and the horse-race, held even on the Sabbath near religious meetings, were distracting and disrupting. Drinking, rioting, gambling, horse-stealing, man-stealing, and disregard of old home ties were general, and even murder was not infrequently committed. Claim jumping was an everyday occurrence. The processes of law and order, when observed, were rough and ready. The lack of public education and a general aloofness to it, afforded further problems to the missionaries. Sectarianism divided the settlers against themselves, thus playing into the hands of the scornful and the infidel. Had it not been done imaginatively and bravely, the work of the missionary societies would have been negated. On the brighter side, there were those who did not bend the knee to Baal; which is to say, home missionary efforts were generally appreciated and welcomed as the means of stimulating the desire for self-improvement and imparting a worthy character

to the newer settlements while things were yet "in their infancy, when the elements of society were combining."²⁸

The times demanded a revision of the mission strategy,²⁹ and the first significant step forward in devising new tactics was taken in the state of New York in 1822 when a dozen missionary units pooled their efforts and formed the United Domestic Missionary Society.³⁰ Predominantly Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed in its make-up, the Society recognized that an itinerant ministry invariably left behind a condition of "divisiveness, sects, and indifference."³¹ It launched, accordingly, the revolutionary policy of sending its ministers to those places only where the people are disposed to settle them as pastors, and are ready and willing to pledge themselves, for the greater part of the support to be allowed them, and to anticipate the assumption of the entire expense at no very distant period.³²

Though the application of this radical principle brought the serious difficulty of obtaining young men for the West in the face of the unsavory rumors and adverse reports which reached their ears concerning its condition,³³ the Society secured a sufficient supply to assure success, and increased its personnel from 39 to 127 in a span of four years. In 1826 thirteen missionaries were stationed in the Old Northwest (Ohio, Michigan Territory, Indiana, and Illinois).³⁴ Three others were located in Missouri.

Of singular advantage for Presbyterianism and Congregationalism in Illinois was the appointment of John Millot Ellis, who worked prodigiously from 1825 to 1828 at Kaskaskia and at St. Genevieve, Missouri, before removing to Jacksonville. According to Ellis, there were but few American families in Kaskaskia, and the Roman Catholic element was "as much under the influence of their priests as in the middle ages." He noted "little, if any, Christian influence," though he did find "some Baptists, some Methodists, and some who were *educated* Presbyterians." The members of the church which

the painstaking Salmon Giddings had formed a few years previously had moved away or had died: the "remnant" of that little flock was "rent and alienated by political animosities." "Wealth and public office are the reigning deities of the West," Ellis declared, and the only "redeeming circumstance" which he could see in Kaskaskia was a Sunday School of eighty scholars.³⁵

Late in 1824 the Missionary Society of Connecticut sent Elbridge Gerry Howe to itinerate in Illinois, who, after visiting Kaskaskia, decided to work in Diamond Grove (Jacksonville) in Morgan County. In 1826, however, he settled at Springfield, then a village of 400 in Sangamon County which had 6,000 settlers. From the first he was struck by the absence of "literary advantages," and was distressed to observe "at least one half of the children growing up in ignorance." "Many families," he informed the Society, "are without the Bible, and some could not read it did they possess it." While there was no Presbyterian church in Springfield until early in 1828 (when John Ellis organized it), Howe met several Methodist circuit preachers, numerous Cumberland Presbyterians and Baptists, and a scattering of "Unitarians, under the name of Christians." Perhaps as a result of the activities of Peter Cartwright in this section, Howe met with "an extensive prejudice against giving a minister any support, as well as against *education* in a minister."³⁶ As he did not receive enough from the Missionary Society of Connecticut to make ends meet, he applied to the United Domestic Missionary Society for a grant, and received it; but his taking of salary arrayed against him "not only many of the Baptists, Methodists, and Cumberland Presbyterians, but some of the old Presbyterians" as well.³⁷ He was compelled to teach school, and also applied for the office of postmaster at Springfield to assure himself a competence.³⁸

Ellis and Howe, Andover Seminary men, and members of the Society of Inquiry in that institution, were Congrega-

tionalists. It is important to associate them, for they were the only Congregational ministers in Illinois at a time when a new missionary instrument was devised.

In view of the success of the United Domestic Missionary Society, the logical next step in reshaping missionary strategy was not long delayed. Following their ordination, Ellis and others, especially Nathaniel Bouton,³⁹ the Concord, New Hampshire, pastor, showed a consuming interest in forming a national society. This idea fortunately earned the support of a group of influential New England leaders⁴⁰ who promptly induced the United Domestic Missionary Society to call a convention of the friends of missions to consummate their purpose. Their objective was attained when this large convention met in the Brick Presbyterian Church of New York, on May 10, 1826, and unanimously approved a constitution for such an organization. It remained only for the United Domestic Missionary Society to become the American Home Missionary Society on May 12.⁴¹

The American Home Missionary Society gave promise of more intensive cultivation of the fields already mapped out, its great object being "to assist congregations unable to support the gospel ministry, and to send the gospel to the destitute within the United States."⁴² Its officers,⁴³ experienced in missionary affairs, reaffirmed the time-tested method of installing pastors over particular churches in lieu of itinerancy. The backbone of this enterprise was Presbyterian; Congregational, Dutch Reformed, and Associate Reformed churches, however, poured their talents into the venture, doing so immediately and liberally. The Society's earnest *Address to the Christian Public*⁴⁴ caught the popular imagination, as its first year's income—in excess of \$18,000—testified. That its impact was being delivered upon the nation as a whole was indicated by the fact that its ministers were being sent into all parts of the country and that funds were received from

churches in the East, West, and South. Four-fifths of the personnel of the former society were reappointed and many additional workers were secured. Twenty-five missionaries were now at work in the Old Northwest, sixteen being stationed in Ohio, four in the Michigan Territory, three in Indiana, and two in Illinois. John M. Ellis and Elbridge G. Howe were stationed at Kaskaskia and Springfield respectively.⁴⁵ Others were located in Missouri.

Samuel Mills found neither a Presbyterian nor a Congregational minister in the Territory in 1812; in 1826, two Congregational ministers were recommissioned by the American Home Missionary Society to serve the people of Illinois. Between these dates Congregationalists, through the Massachusetts Missionary Society, the Missionary Society of Connecticut, and the United Domestic Missionary Society, had supplied isolated settlements with the ablest of young preachers, all of whom performed unsparing service. Considering their character and ability, and all the efforts put forth by these agencies, results were disproportionately small; the significance of their labors lay in the fact that the people of Illinois had shared extensively in the rising missionary budgets, and had received many missionaries who combined first-rate intellectual and spiritual qualities with self-sacrificing zeal and fortitude. From twelve to fifteen Presbyterian churches were permanently established, and even more Sunday Schools were recruited; the Lord's Supper (both a rarity and a blessing on the frontier) and baptism were administered, and the comfort of the Christian religion was supplied when death stalked those who had pitted themselves against the wilderness. Numerous temperance, mission, and Bible societies, standing between the settlers and degradation, ignorance, and indifference to social well-being, were organized in the southern third of the state. All this denoted a first-class achievement.

Congregational ministers had come and Congregational

ministers had gone, and two of them were on the field in 1826, yet no one had ventured to form a Congregational church. Were Congregational churches ever to be formed in Illinois? It was doubtful. The truth is, the question did not cross the missionary's mind. The American Home Missionary Society, as well as the previously existing organizations, sponsored the theory that Presbyterianism and Congregationalism, both aiming at the extension of the kingdom of Christ, were equal to each other. So Eastern Congregationalists generally believed and Western settlers were taught. The Society set out to possess the rich inheritance which had been prepared; and under its banner scores of Congregational and Presbyterian ministers, graduating from Eastern divinity schools,⁴⁶ heard and accepted the imperious call to preempt the West for the Lord.

CHAPTER II

FROM THE FORMATION OF THE AMERICAN HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES

The Executive Committee of the American Home Missionary Society, entering upon their labors "with encouragements such as they could not have felt, had the Society been in every respect new," sent ministers "with instructions to gather new congregations, and labour as they may find opportunity, until, with the choice and cooperation of the people, they may become permanently established in the pastoral office." Its measures were regarded, "not as matters of experiment, but as the moving onward of a plan, enlarged, indeed, in the field of its operations, but which has been already sufficiently proved, and upon which the Almighty had set the seal of his own approbation." Thus reassured, the Society, growing phenomenally, raised the number of its men in Illinois from two to twenty-four between 1826 and 1833.¹ Others, indeed, either achieved their financial independence in rapidly growing churches or removed to other states.²

The appearance on May 1, 1828, of the first number of the *Home Missionary, and American Pastor's Journal* set up a milestone. Launched with a contribution of \$500 from Dr. John Codman, pastor of the Congregational Church of Dorchester, Mass., and a vice-president of the Society, this monthly, which was edited by Rev. Absalom Peters, brought letters, reports, sermons and plans of immense value to the missionaries. Its columns were and are of absorbing interest.

Year by year as they arrived the missionaries took up stations approximating the lines of settlement in Illinois, al-

though they did not always establish themselves where the settlement was of the greatest density.³ In 1833 missionary stations in the Military Tract numbered five—at Rushville, Lewistown, Canton, Quincy, and Carthage. Each one of the more densely settled counties of Morgan, Scott, Greene, and Sangamon was a missionary district, while each one of the towns of Vandalia, Hillsborough, Edwardsville, Belleville, Collinsville, and Kaskaskia was the residence of a missionary. Two missionaries were located near the Wabash River, one above and one below Vincennes. Danville was another important outpost on the eastern flank of the state, and Bloomington and Pekin in the center had one missionary apiece. The important Galena district had been in charge of Aratus Kent since 1829. Three missionaries occupied the settlements clustering about Ottawa, and another station, in charge of Jeremiah Porter, served the region thirty-five miles around Chicago. So placed, the missionary forces were in an excellent position to meet the population advancing along the Illinois River; however, the vast prairie pocket to the east, northeast, and southeast of the geographic center of the state, and practically the entire region north of Ottawa to the Michigan Territory, remained for later settlement. Some missionary districts were established in areas settled up to the density of more than six persons per square mile, but the majority were situated where settlement did not exceed a density of two to six per square mile. The missionary districts of Ottawa and Chicago had a population of less than two persons to the square mile.

On arriving from the East, the ministers invariably attached themselves to the nearest presbytery (that of Missouri, constituted in 1817), and attended the meetings of the nearest synod (that of Indiana, organized in 1826). It was an accomplishment when nine of their number formed the Centre Presbytery at Kaskaskia, on January 9, 1829, in connection

with the Synod of Indiana;⁴ a greater achievement was the erection of the Synod of Illinois, consisting of four presbyteries, at Hillsborough, on September 15, 1831.⁵

The ordination of Congregational ministers to serve in Illinois under the auspices of the American Home Missionary Society did not result in the formation of Congregational churches until 1833, despite the fact that almost without exception these men had been born, reared and trained as Congregationalists in New England. Some received their theological instruction at Princeton, more at Andover, and the largest number at Yale. A few licentiates, organizing Sunday Schools from time to time, were drawn directly from the field. Thus it happened that business men, politicians, editors, and farmers, as well as clergymen, were commissioned. All were favorably disposed toward Presbyterianism, the subject of church government was not agitated, and opinion was unanimous that, under the Plan of Union, they were Presbyterian.⁶ Missionary correspondence reveals no trace of an intention to form Congregational churches. Even Julian M. Sturtevant, who always considered himself a Congregationalist, though he had no definite opinions about church government when he came to Illinois in 1829, did not protest the founding of Presbyterian churches by Congregational ministers.⁷

In sharp contrast to its earlier activities, the Missionary Society of Connecticut played a minor role in Illinois following the organization of the American Home Missionary Society. From 1826 to 1830 only three or four of its men paid it "flying visits," while between 1830 and 1836 not one was sent to the state. Dr. Samuel Baldrige, a frontier doctor-preacher from the South, was commissioned in 1828 and, though he lived in Indiana, preached occasionally near Paris, Illinois. Horace Smith, who was commissioned for Missouri and Illinois, worked in Fulton and Schuyler counties in 1828-1829. There were several reasons for this turn of affairs,

the principal one being that a much smaller missionary personnel was sent out by this Society, and that practically all of its men were going to the Western Reserve, though several continued to labor in Missouri. Of the latter, Salmon Giddings and Hiram Chamberlain came to Illinois upon occasion. Another reason was that after 1831 the Connecticut Domestic Missionary Society (formed in 1816 to care for destitute places in the home state) was an auxiliary of the American Home Missionary Society. On the one hand, money for home missions which was gathered in Connecticut was channeled through the parent Society for work on the national scale; on the other, the income from the large endowment of the Missionary Society of Connecticut was almost exclusively devoted to the support of needy churches in Ohio.⁸

A most significant event was the formation of the "Illinois Association," whose members came to be known as the Yale Band. On February 21, 1829, seven Yale divinity students signed a compact to promote Christian education in Illinois, and all but one of this group—Mason Grosvenor—arrived between 1829 and 1831.⁹ Seven other theological students who had become members of the "Illinois Association" arrived between 1830 and 1833.¹⁰ These thirteen came to the state in the following order: Theron Baldwin and Julian M. Sturtevant, in 1829; Lucien Farnam, Benoni Y. Messenger, Henry Herrick, and Asa Turner, in 1830; John F. Brooks, Albert Hale, Elisha Jenney, William Kirby, and Romulus Barnes, in 1831; Flavel Bascom and William Carter, in 1833. Of the original Yale Band, therefore, six reached Illinois between 1829 and 1831; the second contingent, consisting of seven men, arrived between 1830 and 1833. The fact that arrival was spread over a period of years testifies to the steadfastness of their purpose.

Dramatic parts were played by John M. Ellis, Mason Grosvenor, Theron Baldwin, and Julian M. Sturtevant in the

formation and early days of Illinois College. When Ellis was ordained, he was charged to build an institution of learning in the West, and this counsel soon bore fruit. After removing from Kaskaskia to Jacksonville he wrote of its approaching consummation :

A seminary of learning is projected,—to go into operation next fall—The subscription now stands at between \$2000 and \$3000.—The site is selected in this county, Morgan, & the selection, made with considerable deliberation, by a committee appointed for that purpose; & is one in which the public sentiment perfectly coincides. The $\frac{1}{2}$ qu. sec. purchased for the site is certainly in the most delightful spot I have ever seen—it is about one mile north of the celebrated Diamond Grove, at the east end of Wilson Grove on an eminence overlooking the town & country for several miles around. The object of the seminary is popular,—and it is my deliberate opinion that there never was in our country, a more promising opportunity for any who desire it,—to bestow a few thousand dollars in the cause of education,—& of missions, in building meeting houses, &c—The posture of things now is such as to show to all the intelligent people the good effects of your Society, and To secure their cooperation in a happy degree in all the great benevolent objects of the day—if such aid can now be afforded—in the objects above mentioned.¹¹

This letter, published in the *Home Missionary* for December, 1828, drew the notice of students at Yale who had formed a Society of Inquiry respecting Missions (like that which had previously been formed at Andover). In November the Society heard Theron Baldwin's earnest paper on consecration to Christian work,¹² and directly inspired by this address, Mason Grosvenor and others talked over the prospect of a group of Yale men going out to preach and teach in the West. When Grosvenor read the Ellis letter, affairs were crystallized. Immediately a letter was sent to Ellis asking for further information about his project. The seriousness of the purpose of the writers is evident :

To think of the present number of immortal souls within our own country—living on trial for an endless destiny, is deeply affecting. But to think of their rapid increase in a situation where little or no light shines to invite them to the world of felicity, or to warn them of that dark abyss to which they rapidly hasten is truly overwhelming. What more can be done to give them the light of the Gospel has for some time past been the subject of my investigation.¹³

To this Ellis promptly replied :

Evangelical truth and education must go hand in hand to the work of the world's redemption—We must commence as the fathers of New England commenced. Bibles and Tracts make their way but slowly, and to little purpose when the community do not read.¹⁴

Upon the receipt of Ellis' reply, in which the reasons for the selection of Jacksonville were assigned, the seven original members of the Yale Band pledged their lives to Illinois.¹⁵ Ellis, who was appointed a commissioner to the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1829, toured in quest of funds for the projected institution, using the remnant of his wife's patrimony to cover his expenses. Meanwhile his family suffered severely in straitened circumstances.¹⁶ With the co-operation of all these young men at Yale a fund of more than \$10,000 was raised and with the American Home Missionary Society pledging its interest, the success of the project was assured.¹⁷

Late in the autumn of 1829, Sturtevant and Baldwin arrived, the former bringing his bride. Baldwin assumed the pastorate of the Presbyterian church in Vandalia, while the Sturtevant's remained in Jacksonville. The original college building, "Old Beecher," stood unfinished when Illinois College opened on January 4, 1830, with Sturtevant in charge.¹⁸ That summer the trustees secured the Rev. Dr. Edward Beecher, pastor of the Park Street Church of Boston, as president, and when President Beecher reached the campus in December, trustees and faculty endeavored to secure a charter for the

College. This was not granted, however, until 1835, when Theron Baldwin, in liaison with Governor Duncan, persuaded the legislature to set aside a fear of ecclesiastical domination. The fact that three other groups applied in concert for similar documents was largely responsible for the issuance of the charters at that time.¹⁹

Respecting the Ellises it must be said that John Ellis personally raised the original funds after negotiating the purchase of the site on which the main buildings of Illinois College now stand.²⁰ As an agent for that institution he gave unsparingly of his time, and in representing the Presbytery of Missouri while soliciting funds in the East his influence was compelling. When college affairs were under discussion, his counsel was invaluable. His wife (née Frances Brard), a woman of French descent, was reared in the faith of the Roman Catholic Church but united with the Presbyterian church in Kaskaskia, where Ellis had met her. That she devoted herself to furthering her husband's interests goes without saying. It was in her home that instruction was given to young women in 1830, and from these meetings to the establishment of the Jacksonville Female Academy in 1833 it was but a step. That institution was always regarded as her memorial, and now that it has merged in Illinois College, the present school carries forward the memory of this splendid couple. In the severe cholera epidemic of 1833 neither the life of Frances Ellis nor those of her two children were spared.²¹ Her husband, away on a preaching tour in Indiana, was shocked and grieved upon his return to Jacksonville to hear of the tragedy. After a brief stay in New England, Ellis reestablished himself as a pastor at Grass Lake, in the Michigan Territory, where he represented the American Home Missionary Society and other educational interests which were close to his heart.²²

Although numerous Congregational ministers were found-

ing Presbyterian churches in Illinois, the establishment of the first Congregational church in the state—Princeton—was conditioned by circumstances beyond their control. The Princeton church was organized by an ecclesiastical council constituted for this purpose on March 23, 1831, in the church at Northampton, Massachusetts, and was composed of eighteen members from Northampton and vicinity who had previously decided to take up lands in Illinois.²³ It is perfectly clear that this church was founded in no differences of faith or polity, that its origin had nothing in common with the tensions current in the Presbyterian Church, and that it enjoyed no connection with a missionary society. The first contingent of the Illinois-bound settlers secured passage through the Erie Canal and Lake Erie, thence to the St. Jo River in southwestern Michigan. When this company of four persons reached the portage of the Kankakee they lashed their canoes together and floated down the Illinois River. The spot which was chosen for a home in the West lay in Putnam County (now Bureau) which, in 1831, contained but sixteen families.²⁴ They named the place Greenfield, though later it was called Princeton. When the first little group arrived in July there was but one settler in the place.²⁵

During 1831, the church members held four meetings though no pastor served them. In May, 1832, they held a service in the cabin of Eli and Elijah Smith; but the Blackhawk War which intervened compelled these people to flee before the next scheduled meeting.²⁶ Other members of the original church came on, and on the first Sunday in February, 1834, the church's first communion service was held. Early in this year, Lucien Farnam, a member of the "Illinois Association," who was commissioned by the American Home Missionary Society, came among them and held services, and, becoming their pastor, was installed on October 21, 1835, in the house of worship which had been freshly completed.²⁷

Church records state neither the size nor the cost of this structure, but one of the pastor's letters gives a clue:

Notwithstanding our infancy, and the present pressure for money to meet the land sales, still our people have gone forward with the meeting-house—the frame was raised last week, and will probably be so far completed that we can occupy it in September or October. This is better than I feared. It is a good frame, 28x40 feet, with a basement story for school rooms &c. I obtained a little more than a hundred dollars for this object from our Eastern friends, the remainder is done by the people here.²⁸

Mr. Farnam remained with the Hampshire Colony Congregational Church until August, 1838, when he was granted a year's vacation in order to regain his health. In the autumn, Owen Lovejoy—brother of the martyred Elijah Lovejoy—commenced his pastoral duties;²⁹ but his ordination and installation took place the following year.³⁰

One of the most entertaining narratives of the period was composed by John B. Chittenden,³¹ a leader in the Congregational church of Guilford, Connecticut, who came to Illinois in the fall of 1831, with his family and others from New Haven and vicinity. Three of these five Connecticut families who made the trip together were among those whose devotion to Congregational principles had much to do with the formation of three Congregational churches in Illinois in 1833.

The Chittendens left Guilford on September 18 with the prayers of their pastor exalting them, and at New Haven, where others joined the party, Dr. Leonard Bacon, pastor of the Centre Church, cheered them on their way. One who recalled the event said that Dr. Bacon, "standing on the door step of the house we were leaving, offered an earnest fervent prayer for Gods blessing on all the company, who were going to the new country, that they might be kept, and be brought safely on their way become useful in their new home &c &c.

After closing his prayer he pronounced the benediction and the company started on their long journey to Illinois."³²

From New Haven to New York, crossing the Hudson into New Jersey, the company made their way in weather both fair and foul, reading the Scriptures, praying and singing as they journeyed. Governor Vroom, who took four of the party to his home, "expressed the utmost kindness and gave us the parting hand most affectionately."³³ Despite a great downpour, the party passed on through Easton, where the horses were fed, to Bethlehem, Allentown, and Reading with as much speed as a lame horse could make. Harrisburg and Carlisle were reached uneventfully and both Presbyterian and Methodist services were attended on the Sabbath (October 2nd). Warm weather and cold were interspersed with copious thunderstorms which made the mountain grades difficult from Chambersburg to Elizabethtown. At Pittsburg horses and wagons were sent by land and the colonists boarded the steamboat *New Jersey* which carried them safely to Cincinnati. Chittenden and the two oldest boys spent the Sabbath among friends in the city, while the *New Jersey*, which carried the remainder of the party, steamed off for the West.

At Oxford the three Chittendens waited several days at a brother's for their wagon to come up, and attended the college chapel there. Then a day was required to repair the wagon, which had overturned, shoe the horses, and load for the trip.

Indiana gave them an anxious and difficult time. They encountered the worst roads they had ever seen. They lost their way. They were impeded by swamps and mud and streams too fast to be forded. They camped in the woods or took shelter in an infrequent cabin. They broke their wagon and mended it with the tools they found in a deserted blacksmith's shanty. Yet they kept on through Indianapolis and Terre Haute to Springfield, the first town they found in Illinois.

Here they were cheered by news of the family's safe arrival at Alton. Father and sons at last reached Alton themselves but, the horses having given out, the last twelve miles were made on foot. The Rev. Thomas Lippincott assisted them and urged the family to remain, but on the Rev. Asa Turner's urging they chose Quincy for their home. Intense cold made the ice-bound Mississippi impassable for the steamboat and the Chittendens had to content themselves for two weeks with a one-room cabin at Scipio on the Missouri side. The account of the winter's experiences was told much later by Abraham, son of John B. Chittenden, who was seven years old the day the family reached Quincy—December 15, 1831. Goods were ferried across on sleds. Samuel drove the teams. "Father walked in front with a heavy staff, sounding the ice for air holes." Their goods, which had been lost, finally turned up at Springfield, and "Father's first work was to hitch Old Dogan and Charlie to the wagon and drive to Springfield, get the goods and return to Quincy, and everybody was happy."

At Quincy the Chittendens took a house near the "Lord's Barn," which the Presbyterians used for worship, and the father, now an elder in the church, "taught a singing school—said to be the first class in the Military Tract." During the winter he bought a farm one-half mile southwest of Mendon to which he moved his family, March 14, 1832. A one-room cabin, five cows, three yearling steers, and twelve acres sown to wheat which the boys flailed and winnowed and milled at a neighbor's made life good indeed.

In the Chittenden cabin at Mendon on February 20, 1833, the first Congregational church to be organized in Illinois was formed with eighteen charter members, the Rev. Solomon Hardy officiating.³⁴

A missionary task of paramount importance was begun when the Rev. Jeremiah Porter removed from Sault Sainte

Marie to Chicago in 1833. At the Sault, Mr. Henry Schoolcraft had for some time been stationed as federal Indian agent, and to Fort Brady, the army post in this place, came a Congregational minister as chaplain in the autumn of 1831—the Rev. Jeremiah Porter. A native of Hadley, Massachusetts, where he received ordination, and commissioned by the American Home Missionary Society, Porter formed a Bible class and organized a church on the post. From Mr. Schoolcraft, in whose home he lived, he came to know more about Chicago, where Fort Dearborn secured the lives of three hundred people.³⁵

In 1832 the Black Hawk War required the sending of a company of soldiers from Fort Brady to Chicago. The following year, when additional troops were ordered from the Sault to Fort Dearborn, Porter was invited to accompany the commanding officer, Major John Fowle, and the majority of his church came along, arriving on May 13, 1833.³⁶

There were then several families in Chicago who had fled from the Indians from the vicinity of Naperville, and additional emigrants were arriving from the East. Chicago was “a wide, wet prairie, as far as eye could reach, on a muddy river winding south over a sandbar to the Lake, with a few scattered dwellings.” There was “a single street, on the river, from the Fort to the Point,³⁷ near where Lake Street bridge now is.” The only place of worship was a log schoolhouse, over the bridge.³⁸

Fortunately, it is possible to see the religious situation in Chicago in something like its completeness.³⁹ The Methodists established the first religious meetings. The renowned circuit rider, “Father” Jesse Walker, and others who labored with him, came from missions along the Fox River to hold monthly meetings in the schoolhouse, lodging on occasion with a Colonel Hamilton and his wife, emigrants from the South.⁴⁰ Upland southerners who had settled in the Illinois River Valley were

removing to the northern part of the state, and to care for their religious interests the Methodists had outlined a circuit by 1828 which reached from Peoria to Chicago.⁴¹ One of these preachers, the Rev. Stephen R. Beggs, was given charge of the Chicago mission in 1831 and succeeded in forming a Methodist class, consisting of ten members.⁴²

The Baptists also were active. In August, 1833, the Rev. Allen B. Freeman was sent from Hamilton (N. Y.) Theological Seminary,⁴³ and formed a church on October 19, consisting of eighteen members. Freeman also preached in the country around Chicago.

On May 1, 1833, Father John Mary Irenaeus St. Cyr arrived, having been sent to Chicago by the Roman Catholic Bishop Joseph Rosati of St. Louis; on May 5 he recited the Mass in the log cabin belonging to Mark Beaubien. Steps were taken to erect a building for Catholic services on the canal lot near Lake and State Streets, and this chapel was dedicated in October.⁴⁴

When Jeremiah Porter came ashore with his church, shelter was found in the Fort where a service was held on Sunday, May 19, the carpenter shop being "emptied, cleaned, and seated" for the occasion. Porter preached the sermon.⁴⁵ In the afternoon in the crowded schoolhouse on the Point, Porter preached again, and in the evening he led prayers in the Fort.⁴⁶

Porter has furnished a good account of his congregation, the nucleus of which was composed of the principal business men of the town and a number of soldiers.⁴⁷

Within the Fort were professing Christians—two officers, three wives of officers, three wives of soldiers, and ten soldiers, all these from my Fort Brady church. All those outside of the Fort, except Mrs. Charles Taylor, were born in New England, so were the army officers, Major Fowle, and Major Wilcox, and educated in Congregational churches, like myself, yet

we organized a Presbyterian church and called it the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago.⁴⁸

This historic church, the first Protestant church to be organized in Chicago, was formed on June 26, 1833. Two of the elders, Major D. L. Wilcox and John Wright, were Congregationalists. A third, Philo Carpenter, was a Presbyterian.⁴⁹ Aaron Russell, another Congregationalist, was elected elder the following year. The membership included twenty-six persons, sixteen or seventeen of whom were garrisoned in the Fort.⁵⁰ Miss Eliza Chappel, already known to Mr. Porter as a teacher in Mackinac, was also an original member, and was the first teacher in the first public school in Chicago, which was organized in the Presbyterian meeting house. (Miss Chappel and Mr. Porter were married at Rochester, New York, on June 15, 1835).⁵¹ The Sunday School, begun by Philo Carpenter, took on new life. The Covenant and Articles of Faith of the Presbytery of Detroit were adopted,⁵² and in due time additional members were recruited from Eastern emigrants. Other churches meanwhile increased their membership from these sources.

Previous to the organization of the Presbyterian church the Methodists had used the log school house for their own meetings. The Baptists who had built a log house for a school shared it with the Presbyterians on alternate Sundays.⁵³ As has already been mentioned, the Roman Catholics consecrated their chapel in October.⁵⁴

The Presbyterians built their own house of worship as soon as practicable, erecting it "out on the prairie." This site was "one and a half blocks from South Water Street, on the alley, on Clark Street, in the rear of the present Sherman House," and the building cost \$600. Later this structure was removed "to the rear of the lot on the corner of Clark and Washington Streets, and used until the brick church was

built in front of it on Washington Street.”⁵⁵ Previously the Baptists and the Presbyterians worshipped on alternate Sundays “in a room on Franklin Street, near the Old Post Office, in a building put up by the Baptists, of two stories, the upper room for a classical school, and the lower for worship.” For two or three months the house built for the Baptist minister was used for worship. Before Mr. Freeman’s arrival, however, the Baptists attended services in the Fort and at the Point. Both Porter and Freeman visited settlements in the country near Chicago once a month, “one remaining in town the Sabbath the other was gone.” When the Presbyterian building was completed, Porter proposed that these groups continue worshipping in it, alternately, but the Baptists chose to remain by themselves.

So, with perfect cordiality, we divided, and had our separate congregations and Sabbath schools; and, the first pleasant Sabbath after the dedication, more were present in my church than had been while the two societies worshipped together. Religious interest seemed greatly increased in both churches.⁵⁶

Of the memorable service of dedication, which took place on Saturday, January 4, 1834, Porter has said:

The elements, on dedication day, were against us. The mild autumn was succeeded by intense cold. I had invited the Rev. N. C. Clark, of Du Page, who had come into the State during the summer, and the Rev. Mr. Humphrey of Michigan to aid in the dedication, but the intense cold—mercury 29 degrees below zero—prevented their coming, so I was only aided in the dedication services by Rev. Brother Allen B. Freeman, the Baptist minister, who had been laboring in Chicago, by my side, since August.⁵⁷

Under Porter’s vigorous leadership the church grew from the original twenty-six to one hundred members within two and one-half years, and achieved self-support before that. Some of its members were already accumulating wealth and on December 29, 1834, “the prospect of much temporal pros-

perity" being in view, the church passed the following resolution:

That we will relieve the American Home Missionary Society from further contributions for support of our pastor, Rev. J. Porter, from the first of June last; and, while we deeply feel our obligation for past assistance, we esteem it our duty and privilege to raise for him a competent support; and, to return, in due time, to its treasury, more than we have received from it.⁵⁸

"Only one year from its organization did the church receive aid from that Society," said Porter; "and a single member of the earliest congregation has left, by will to it, \$10,000—the late Flavel Mosely."⁵⁹

Jeremiah Porter remained as pastor in Chicago until the autumn of 1835 when he accepted a call to the Main Street Presbyterian Church of Peoria: after the departure of the Porters the church was without a pastor for two and one-half years, but in 1838 the Rev. John Blatchford was called to its pastorate.⁶⁰

Shortly after the Chicago church was formed, Porter "passed a Sabbath at a settlement on the Du Page, thirty miles west," where he found fifteen professing Christians from Vermont (the Congregational church of Benson).⁶¹ To his great joy they had "transplanted New England piety into these beautiful prairies where it bids fair to flourish with strength equal to that seen on the hard soil of the Green Mountains." Writing from Chicago he said:

They had two services on the Sabbath, in their log forest sanctuary: a pleasant Sab. Sch(ool), a temp(erance) Society, & distribute tracts monthly. At their request I expect to organize them into a church before the second Sabbath of this month, & administer the Lord's Supper on that day, when there may be many more persons from other settlements to enjoy the feast of love with them.⁶²

This appointment was kept and the "Presbyterian Church at Du Page" was organized. Porter wrote:

According to appointment I went on the second week of July to organize a church at Fountaindale, to my high gratification I found Bro. Clark there ready to take the infant into paternal embrace & watch its growth. Br. Bobbit was also present to aid in the work. The Lord had sent forth laborers when I had supposed myself alone. Saturday, the 13 ult., we passed in fasting, prayer, & exhortation, organized the church & elected elders. On Sabbath we repaired to the grove, the place being too small to accommodate the audience, where we had previously met. The supper was administered to about 35 communicants. It was a cheering scene. Few had dared to expect such an one at this early period in the settlement of our frontier. The grain of mustard seed we trust will become a great tree so that multitudes shall yet rest under its delightful shade.⁶³

The month after this touching scene greeted his eyes Porter also assisted in forming a church at Blackstone's Grove, thirty miles southwest of Chicago near the Des Plaines River (the present Homer Congregational Church).⁶⁴ Known as the "Union Church," it was still under Porter's care in January, 1834,⁶⁵ but William Kirby, who had served two years on the faculty of Illinois College, took charge of it in the spring.⁶⁶

The claim has been made that the church at Naperville is the second Congregational church to have been organized in Illinois.⁶⁷ Actually, the people on the Du Page were organized as a Presbyterian church on July 13, 1833. On August 29, however, they were discussing the possibility of becoming a Congregational church and when the matter was again discussed on May 2, 1834, the church resolved to change its polity, though the change was not effected until August 1, 1834.⁶⁸ This action represented an about-face, for, having accepted Presbyterianism with their eyes wide open, the people now embraced Congregationalism with fervor. In

both instances action was taken solemnly and reverently. It is, accordingly, historically accurate to regard the Naperville church as Congregational as of August 1, 1834; meanwhile, several other Congregational churches had been formed. But the church at Du Page exerted a powerful influence in favor of Congregationalism both before and after it became Congregational, as was shown by the formation of the Fox River Union in 1835.⁶⁹

Prior to 1833 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church was exercised by many issues containing the seeds of discord, and the strife which was entailed between Congregationalists and Presbyterians generally soon manifested itself in Illinois.

One of these issues was the working of the Plan of Union, which presented difficulties none had foreseen. The practice of certain provisions brought stresses and strains that received the Assembly's routine attention but eventually earned its unqualified disapproval. To take an example: many churches formed of Congregational and Presbyterian families governed themselves by "standing committees," the standing-committeemen functioning in lieu of ruling elders. Between 1820 and 1833 a number of these committeemen attended the General Assembly,⁷⁰ since there seemed to be no question of their right to do so. In itself this practice did not appear as a breach of faith with the Plan, but with other vexing issues commanding the Assembly's attention the presence of standing-committeemen raised alarm and stirred up strife.

Clement Tuttle, a committeeman from the Presbytery of Grand River, who attended the Assembly of 1831, became the subject of discord. Prior to its rising the Assembly reviewed the subject of committeemen's rights and declared that the "appointment of members of standing committees is inexpedient and of questionable constitutionality, and therefore ought not in the future to be made."⁷¹

This action was greeted with the vigorous protest of thirty-one commissioners (including Theron Baldwin of Illinois), the protestants taking the ground that this move was made two weeks after the Assembly had been in session and after one-third of the commissioners had returned to their homes, and that it contravened the Plan of Union.⁷² The committee which was appointed to answer this protest replied that while "an appearance of a departure from the letter of the Constitution" was to be noticed, no evidence of a violation of its spirit was apparent. If there was an infraction of the Constitution of the Church, reasoned the committee, the fault was in the treaty and the "only proper remedy for the supposed evil would be found in a regular proceeding to amend or annul the said treaty."⁷³

The Plan of Union brought to Presbyterians the additional embarrassment of welcoming to the General Assembly the fraternal delegates who were appointed by the four Congregational associations of New England to attend and vote in its proceedings. In the interest of protecting the purity of the faith and the integrity of the Presbyterian Church, the Assembly of 1827 revoked their right to vote which had been exercised for nearly a generation. The General Association of Massachusetts, however, did not acquiesce in this revocation until 1829.⁷⁴

Another vexing issue was that of home missions. Since 1826 Presbyterians generally had participated in the expansion of the American Home Missionary Society, but in 1827 the powers of the Assembly's Board of Missions were enlarged,⁷⁵ and in 1828 the Board was reconstituted so as to include laymen in its membership.⁷⁶ A rivalry none had foreseen was springing up, and the officers of the American Home Missionary Society, anticipating a collision, proposed a union of the Society and the Board of Missions. Certain members of the Board, of which Dr. Ashbel Green was the president, did not

take kindly to this suggestion, and in 1829 the proposal was dropped.⁷⁷

Some conception of this rivalry may be formed by noticing the expansion of the Board's operations. In 1828 only 31 missionaries were under its care, but in 1829 this number was raised to 101. In 1830 the Board appointed 198 men.⁷⁸ In 1832 no less than 256 missionaries were employed in twenty-one states and territories and in Canada, the Board disbursing \$20,000 in the process.⁷⁹ In 1835 the Board paid out \$27,000 for the services of 224 men in nineteen states and territories.⁸⁰ On the other hand, the personnel of the American Home Missionary Society increased steadily from 169 in 1826 to 676 in 1834.⁸¹ When allowance is made for the fact that by 1834 two-thirds of the ministers under the American Home Missionary Society were serving Presbyterian congregations, it will be seen that Presbyterian churches controlled by men of the Old School persuasion sensed the necessity of overhauling a voluntary Society which had taken the lead in supplying the pulpits of their denomination.

One of the leaders of the conservative group was Joshua L. Wilson, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati. With Ralph Cushman, local agent for the American Home Missionary Society, Wilson indulged in a bitter quarrel, publishing in 1831 a pamphlet against the Society, in which he charged that its objective was to "overthrow Presbyterianism as it now exists." Foreseeing the day when "every judicatory, every institution, and all the funds of the Presbyterian Church will be completely and entirely under the control of the American Home Missionary Society," Wilson argued as follows:

The Congregational churches have no standard of doctrines. Every man preaches what he pleases, from Antinomianism to Universalism. . . . Home Missionary men consent to be ruled only till they can govern. . . . The Lord Jesus Christ committed the management of Christian missions to his Church. The

Presbyterian Church is a Christian missionary society. The American Home Missionary Society is not an ecclesiastical, but a civil institution. By interference and importunity she disturbs the peace and injures the prosperity of the Presbyterian Church.⁸²

Cushman's rejoinder, *An Appeal to the Christian Public*,⁸³ resisted the attack and expressed the opinion that the whole of Wilson's argument was "the offspring of jealousy and suspicion." Moreover, Absalom Peters, the Secretary of the Society, urged Wilson to desist, though to little purpose.⁸⁴ A further illustration of the intensity of this struggle may be seen in the resignation of Wilson from the Board of Trustees of Lane Seminary in Walnut Hills when Asa Mahan was elected to the Board and Lyman Beecher was elected the Seminary president. Wilson also cancelled his subscription to the Seminary.⁸⁵

This struggle for power rocked the General Assembly and made difficult its task of constituting the Board of Missions. In the Assembly of 1831 it was moved that the reappointment of the Board be indefinitely postponed. When this motion was withdrawn, the report of the committee to which this overture had been sent was fully discussed, and finally a committee of compromise was appointed to weigh all the issues involved. The committee's report was adopted, correspondence between the synods of Ohio, Cincinnati, Kentucky, Tennessee, Western Tennessee, Indiana, and Illinois being recommended as the means of reaching an agreement on the conduct of missions in the West and South. The western brethren were to be left free, of course, to form any organization desired for the peaceful promotion of missions; all the synods and presbyteries in the Mississippi valley might be comprehended under this plan. With this provision, it became possible to reappoint the Board of Missions.⁸⁶ Although the western synods fell short of agreeing,⁸⁷ the Synod of Illinois, at its very first meeting,

adopted a resolution deploring the "conflicting interests and antagonistic methods of the American Home Missionary Society and the Board of Missions," and stated its earnest desire to have all missionary work within its bounds placed in the hands of a committee of the Synod's appointing.⁸⁸

Another major issue was that of the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church. Since many Presbyterian congregations were being served by New Englanders whose training was received at Congregational seminaries, notably at Yale, where Professor Nathaniel William Taylor entreated his students to engage in independent thinking,⁸⁹ the presence of not a few of Taylor's disciples and friends in Presbyterian ranks occasioned fear and suspicion. Some of these men were ordained by Congregational councils and some by the American Home Missionary Society in specially arranged services, and it grieved the Presbyterians that the Western presbyteries were not being called upon to perform their constitutional duty of examining all candidates and of conducting the ordinations.

Through the columns of the *Christian Advocate*, Dr. Ashbel Green advertised the "important and very fearful crisis" which the Church had reached.⁹⁰ And was not one of his own brethren, namely, the Rev. Albert Barnes, partly responsible for this deplorable situation? At the time of his installation (1830) as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, Barnes, an avowed follower of Taylor, was made to appear before the Presbytery of Philadelphia on charges of preaching and publishing a doctrinal error with respect to the atoning work of Christ. From these charges Barnes appealed to the General Assembly of 1831, which resolved that the presbytery "ought to have suffered the whole thing to pass without further notice," that further proceedings should be suspended, and that it was expedient to divide the presbytery.⁹¹

Closely related to the subject of doctrinal purity was that of order. The question was that if ministers and licen-

tiates were in good standing in other denominational bodies, should the presbyteries receiving them demand of them an examination similar to that which was administered to all Presbyterian candidates? Continuous pressure applied by the Synod of Pittsburgh brought about the appointment of a committee by the Assembly of 1829 to return a decisive answer to this question. The committee, consisting of Drs. Ashbel Green, Ezra S. Ely, and Thomas H. Skinner, all of the Philadelphia Presbytery, was charged to consider the specific question, "What mode of procedure shall be adopted in organizing churches and receiving ministers under our present Constitution?"⁹²

The committee reported to the Assembly of 1830 that ministers and licentiates of other denominations ought to be required to affirm the answers that Presbyterian candidates were required to affirm to questions concerning the faith and government of the Church, which all presbyteries were obliged to propose. It was improper, thought the committee, to receive strangers into connection with the General Assembly on terms other than those which it imposed on Presbyterian ministers.⁹³ The result was that a rule was passed requiring every presbytery to examine everyone who came up for admission over all the constitutional questions relating to the faith and government of the Presbyterian Church.⁹⁴

While the import of this rule was that all newly-ordained Congregationalists serving Presbyterian congregations organized under the Plan of Union should become full-fledged Presbyterian ministers, it does not appear that disunity was at first created, for the committee which sponsored this rule reported its belief that such a procedure was already being followed. Seen in this light, therefore, the Assembly's action was to be regarded as little more than precautionary; twenty-five years later, however, Julian M. Sturtevant, president of Illinois College, stated that the passage of this rule was the

turning-point in the Congregational-Presbyterian relationships.⁹⁵

Particularly in Illinois did Congregational ministers regard themselves as Presbyterian, but there was no immediate change of attitude if actions are made the standard of reference. The Centre Presbytery adopted this rule on October 9, 1830, when Theron Baldwin and John Mathews, the committee appointed to examine the Assembly's *Minutes* "with reference to any business which may come before Presbytery," reported its passage by the late Assembly.⁹⁶ The Centre Presbytery had just received two Congregational ministers, namely, Edward Beecher, president of Illinois College, from Suffolk South Association, and Asa Turner, pastor at Quincy, from the Association of New Haven, West; yet at the very first meeting of the Synod of Illinois the Moderator, John Bergen, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, an Old School man from New Jersey, inscribed the following upon the Minutes of the Centre Presbytery:

The Committee appointed to examine the records of the Presbytery of Illinois report that they recommend the approval of the same, with the following exceptions: Page 89, Edward Beecher was received into the Presbytery without answering the Constitutional questions, also, page 93, Asa Turner was received without subscribing the Confession of Faith.⁹⁷

To have its Minutes returned bearing such *obiter dicta* aroused the resentment of the Presbytery, which in reply passed the following resolutions at Quincy on December 22, 1831:

Whereas in this entry there is a charge against the Presbytery of disregarding the Recommendation of General Assembly and particularly as it was expressly stated before the Synod that the Recommendation had been formally adopted as a standing rule of Presbytery at their first meeting after said Recommendation appeared, and had never from that time, in a single instance, been departed from; but that the error of Presbytery

was not in neglecting to require assent to the Constitutional questions, *but only, in failing to enter a notice of it on the minutes* of Presbytery, therefore,

Resolved, that this Presbytery regrets that the Synod, especially in these times of unparalleled excitement and jealousy, should have placed on our minutes a charge so inconsistent with truth and justice and brotherly love; and as such feel ourselves called upon to express our entire disapprobation of the above proceeding, and request that the entry in question on our Record be corrected.

Resolved that the stated clerk be directed to lay the above resolutions before Synod.⁹⁸

William Kirby, another member of the Yale Band who entered upon his duties as a teacher in Illinois College, united with the Presbytery of Illinois at Jacksonville on March 29, 1832. Presumably to avoid repeating such a fracas, the stated clerk entered the following minute:

The Rev. Wm. Kirby presented a letter of dismission and recommendation from the Association of the Eastern District of New Haven Co. Ct. and after answering to the Constitutional questions in the affirmative was received as a member of this Presbytery.⁹⁹

It is not unlikely that some Congregationalists chafed under this rule. While Julian M. Sturtevant was alone in 1829-1830 in cherishing favorable sentiments toward Congregationalism, he gave no evidence of a factional or contentious spirit. His *Autobiography* makes clear his position:

In 1855 I still retained my connection with the Presbyterian church. I had tried to be fully understood by my brethren of that denomination. My language had invariably been: 'I am not a Presbyterian. I came among you as a Congregationalist, and as such I have continued with you. My connection here is fraternal rather than ecclesiastical. For years I have uniformly excused myself from voting upon questions of ecclesiastical politics. If with this understanding it is desirable that I continue with you, I shall seek no change.' I had, however, always maintained my unrestrained liberty of free utter-

ance on all subjects, religious and ecclesiastical ones not excepted.¹⁰⁰

But even in a General Assembly with a New School majority it was easier to precipitate than suppress a controversy involving Presbyterian-Congregational relations, and the Assembly of 1832 found itself embarrassed by three major issues which produced heat as soon as they reached the floor.

Two standing-committeemen attended the Assembly from the Presbytery of Grand River but withdrew their credentials the following day, presumably to avoid a scene.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, resolutions were offered and seconded, as follows:

(1) The Plan of Union of 1801 does not authorize any committeeman to sit and act in any presbytery as a ruling elder, unless he represents a church composed partly of Presbyterians and partly of Congregationalists; nor even then, unless in the express case of discipline provided for under the fourth head of that plan of union;

(2) The Plan of Union does not authorize any private person not being a committeeman, to sit and act in any case whatever;

(3) The Plan of Union, when truly construed, does not authorize any committeeman to sit or act in any case in any synod or in the General Assembly.

The Assembly finally declared that "without expressing an opinion on the resolutions offered, it is inexpedient to consider them."¹⁰²

The Presbytery of Cincinnati in which the Old School spirit was dominant because of the leadership of Joshua L. Wilson, sent up to the Assembly of 1832 the following memorial:

The evils of which the Presbytery complain and for which they seek a remedy, are, the introduction into Presbyterian churches of doctrines at variance with our standards, the muti-

lation of our confession of Faith, the formation of new confessions, the introduction of a mixed and lax discipline and the spread of a spirit of Congregationalism through the whole Church. 'Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.' It is believed that these evils will increase untill the General Assembly shall dissolve the Union between Congregational and Presbyterian churches—and change their mode of correspondence from the personal to the epistolary mode.¹⁰³

Reports circulated in the Assembly of 1832 that some presbyteries in the northern and western synods were receiving Congregational ministers without examination over the constitutional questions as specified by the rule of 1830. The Synod of the Western Reserve, for example, was directed to examine into the state of the churches and presbyteries under its care and report to the next Assembly.¹⁰⁴ Dr. Green's warning was being heeded and the great question of subscription to the Confession of Faith was thoroughly reconsidered. Yet the committee in whose hands this overture was placed believed that "further legislation on the subject, by the Assembly, would be unnecessary and inexpedient." The Constitution of the Church and the rule of 1830 were thought to be sufficient bulwarks and both were recommended "to the attention of the presbyteries under the care of the Assembly."¹⁰⁵ While the Synod of the Western Reserve was able to clear itself in the Assembly of 1833 (save with reference to the strict necessity of the ruling elder),¹⁰⁶ it was increasingly apparent that the Plan of Union and the American Home Missionary Society, both inextricably interwoven with Congregationalism, were the special targets of the Old School sharpshooters.

Against this background it is not difficult to see how the turning-point in Illinois missionary affairs was reached in 1833. The dominance of the Presbyterian system was apparent; it was anomalous to those accustomed to Congregational procedures that a score of Congregational ministers serving Presbyterian congregations, many of which were

largely composed of Congregationalists, should have no thought of forming churches on the Congregational plan.

On the part of laymen, agitation to form Congregational churches increased, rising to unmanageable proportions both before and after the heresy trial of the Illinois College professors.

On the part of ministers, there began to be expressed a stored-up desire to amend that custom which, seemingly in contravention of the spirit and purpose of the Plan of Union, was deterring everyone from the founding of Congregational churches even though certain elements desired them.

Though the organization of Congregational churches met with disapproval both locally and in New England, it was nevertheless carried out at least four times in quick succession before the close of 1833 (three times in Adams County and once in Morgan County). It was distressingly evident that Presbyterians and Congregationalists must make fundamental readjustments to a specifically Western problem, that they must reinterpret themselves to one another.

The first Congregational church organized in Illinois was that of Mendon. Along the banks of Bear Creek, ten or twelve miles northeast of Quincy in Adams County, there was a settlement which included the John B. Chittenden and Samuel Bradley families from Guilford, Connecticut. Solomon Hardy, a missionary, preached in this neighborhood, and also at Quincy, during the absence of his friend, Asa Turner, from the spring of 1832 to the spring of 1833, while the latter toured the East for funds for Illinois College. From Quincy, Hardy wrote as follows:

There is an interesting settlement on Bear Creek about 10 miles north of this place, which has 10 or 12 Presbyterians, or rather Congregationalists scattered through it, where I may probably labour. There is some prospect that I shall still

continue to labour in this county after Br. Turner comes back.¹⁰⁷

The Mendon church records tell of the organization of this church at New Guilford, or Fairfield, on February 20, 1833. The Bradleys and Chittendens were among the eighteen charter members. Solomon Hardy officiated, preached the sermon, and administered the Lord's Supper.¹⁰⁸

At some time in 1833 another Congregational church was formed at "The Mounds" in Adams County, but this church became Presbyterian shortly after its formation. The probable location of this church was in Sections 4 and 5, Township 1 South, Range 4 West of the Fourth P. M. (Lee Township), in present-day Brown County, near the Mound Station, or Timewell, on the Wabash Railroad. Who formed it, or who belonged to it, is not known.¹⁰⁹

Another Congregational church which was organized in 1833 was the church at Quincy, and its organization supplied the first evidence of a turning from Presbyterianism. Under Asa Turner's aggressive leadership, the Presbyterian church which he had organized in 1830 made rapid strides, although it continued to receive aid from the American Home Missionary Society. Turner was a Congregationalist, but united with the Centre Presbytery. As a member of the Yale Band he was a trustee of Illinois College and being obliged in 1832 to tour the East for funds, he chose Solomon Hardy to supply his pulpit. Hardy, while looking through the church's papers, exclaimed that if such records were sent up to the presbytery, "they would be sent back at once, as they were Congregational, and nothing Presbyterian about them."¹¹⁰ On October 10, 1833, the church unanimously reorganized as the First Congregational Church of Quincy.¹¹¹

The Rev. George F. Magoun, Turner's biographer, was privileged to read some of the latter's letters and to consult his unpublished autobiography. A few extracts from letters

written to the American Home Missionary Society were published in the *Home Missionary* but these, at least in their published form, were silent on the reorganization of the church. "Even here," writes the biographer, "the pastor did not lead off, and was no sectarian theorist or partisan. He had been an orderly Presbyterian minister, though the form of government did not approve itself to his convictions."¹¹²

Turner returned to Quincy in May, 1833. While in the East he and his wife experienced a great sadness in the death of their child, and they returned during a fearful cholera epidemic. After holding a few protracted meetings, Turner was forced to cancel the schedule he had arranged for Illinois and Missouri. Of the disastrous effects of the epidemic he informed the Society, stating that while his own church had lost no members, many townspeople had been taken, the Methodist minister had passed away, and scores had fled.¹¹³ A letter expressing sympathy for the church, the townsfolk, and the Turners was immediately forwarded by the Society. No reference to polity was made, nor was it implied that either the pastor or the church was falling down in the task of upholding Presbyterian orthodoxy.¹¹⁴ However that may be, Turner wrote to some one in New York as early as June:

My church are all Congregationalists in their feelings. One of our elders is gone; we can not find another who will be ordained. They claim the privilege of worshiping God according to the dictates of conscience. What shall be done? Eight or ten Congregationalists are around (us) who refuse to unite with us as yet.¹¹⁵

A line from the unpublished autobiography goes a little further: "It was said that Congregationalism would not do for the West, but after trying Presbyterianism for three years, it was thought best to change the polity."¹¹⁶ There is no record of Turner's activities between his return from the East in May to the reorganization of the church in October, beyond the

mention of revival meetings near Quincy. His biographer does not tell us what Turner was doing during this period, nor are Turner's letters to the Society (if any) to be found. What is surprising is that the Society's letter books contain no letters to Turner but the one cited. From these sources, therefore, no light is thrown on the question as to what part (if any) Asa Turner played in effecting reorganization. What is more surprising is that no letters from Illinois missionaries refer to this action.

Deacon Keyes affirmed that Solomon Hardy's remark about the unfitness of the records to bear the scrutiny of presbytery "stimulated our church, on the return of Mr. Turner, to change our name to Congregational, before exposing our ignorance of Presbyterianism."¹¹⁷ At any rate, the movement to reorganize was not initiated until early summer. It is incredible, however, that the church was in the dark concerning Presbyterian usages, for Turner had attended enough meetings of the presbytery and synod to familiarize himself with them. If, however, the church had for two years or more been Presbyterian in name only but in every other sense Congregational (as Keyes said), its records would bear out the fact and Hardy might have detected it. Perhaps the majority were long since accustomed to independency. At least the three Baptists and the three Congregationalists in the original membership must have been. Four of the original members were Presbyterians, but five were "from the world," that is to say, had no denominational affiliation. Perhaps, as the church grew, the membership was recruited from the more prosperous element of the town, an element which frequently insists upon self-determination. Turner himself may have advised the shift much earlier. He was in the East, as we know, from the spring of 1832 to the spring of 1833. It is not known that he wrote to Hardy or that Hardy wrote to him during that year. Hardy carried on Turner's work as well as his health allowed, but

for months he was unequal to the taxing duties of the pastorate. Undoubtedly the people from Quincy who had formed the Mendon church took occasion to visit their former neighbors and fellow church members; being Congregationalists, they probably exerted a considerable influence in Quincy. And William Carter stated that Chittenden was "invited to be present and counsel with them, at the reorganization of the church on the Congregational plan."¹¹⁸

Possibly other events influenced Turner and his people. In the context of Presbyterian life in Illinois, one of these may have predisposed the Quincy people to manifest keener interest in Congregationalism—the celebrated heresy trial of President Edward Beecher and Professors Julian M. Sturtevant and William Kirby of Illinois College.¹¹⁹ A certain minister in the Presbytery of Illinois, William J. Fraser by name, was pastor of the "Providence" church at Virginia (Cass County); when the Presbytery met in his house on March 28, Fraser presented charges of unsound teaching against the above-named faculty members. Moreover, he had published an article in the *Illinois Herald* (Springfield, March 9, 1833) which was "highly injurious to the character of these three gentlemen. Accordingly, charges of slander were preferred against Fraser. The cases were issued at an adjourned meeting of Presbytery in Jacksonville on April 23rd. The charges of unsound doctrine against the three brethren were not sustained. The charge of slander against Mr. Fraser was sustained, and he was suspended from the functions of the ministry. In both cases Mr. Fraser gave notice of appeal to Synod."¹²⁰

The trial was "humiliating and disgusting in the extreme," even though the Presbytery acquitted the accused.¹²¹ The Synod of Illinois, which met at Jacksonville on September 19, heard Fraser's and other appeals and, curiously enough, sustained him and removed the sentence of the Presbytery. The

other appeals were withdrawn. Sturtevant and Beecher were not present, being detained near St. Louis by serious illness.¹²²

Turner's reaction to this trial is not known, nor is it known that he had heard about it before returning to Illinois; but it cannot be doubted that eventually he learned all about it. It must have come as a painful revelation of the motives actuating a number of his brethren, and more than likely his resentment over the treatment accorded his friends at the College reached the fever stage. But his biographer states:

I am not aware of any particular public events occurring in the Presbyterian body which influenced him, save the trial of Albert Barnes (1830). He had become acquainted with Missouri Presbyterianism and slavery, which no doubt had its effect upon him. One who had unusual opportunities to know says: 'Mr. Turner joined the Presbytery on coming to Illinois and was intent only on the spread of the gospel. But the warfare between the Old School and the New School, and the electioneering for Commissioners of the General Assembly, aroused his Congregationalism.' This must have been in 1832 and 1833.¹²³

Strife in the Synod of Illinois may have had much to do with shaping Turner's decision, and he became a member of the Presbytery of Schuyler which was erected at the (September, 1833) meeting of Synod which sustained Fraser.¹²⁴ It is not unfair to assume that there were collisions and that he was dared to start the Congregational ball rolling. Turner was a delegate to the Albany Convention of Congregational ministers in October, 1852, and there delivered an address in which he said:

Twenty-two years ago I removed to the West. I was taught that when I went out of New England I must be a Presbyterian. I had never in my life heard a sermon upon our church polity, and had never seen a line in print upon the subject. As I have said, I came to the West under the impression that it was necessary that I should be a Presbyterian; and soon after arriving there, I organized a church in Adams county, Illinois.

Everything went on harmoniously for about two years; but soon there began to be friction in the General Assembly itself, and our church members became restive: and those who are acquainted with the history of the times at the West, know the difficulties we had to pass through. Our religious meetings up to the time of Synod were like political meetings of the two parties. My church demanded of me that they should be Congregational. I hesitated some time about acceding to their wishes. My brethren in the ministry all opposed the idea. A good father sent me word, that if I organized a Congregational church, he must come out against me; and one of the Presbyterian fathers, whose name is revered in all the land, told me that if I organized a Congregational church in Quincy, he would come and preach me down. But I organized a church, and when he came to Quincy, I told him, that after we got down through the soil in Quincy, we came to solid rock; that the Mississippi had not washed away the soil, and I thought it probable never would. According to the Plan of Union, when a church is to be organized, those who are to compose it are to have a choice in regard to its form. I was, however, reproved for giving my church its choice. The whole feeling was that Congregationalism must be frowned down. The blame is that New England fathers have not taught their own children. If they had been taught, if all the light had been spread over the land which is spread over it now, we should have seen an entirely different result. . . . But time has passed on, and now the right is granted. And we rejoice to feel that the right is granted from you, because in 1837, after having organized thirteen churches in northern Illinois, composed of those who asked me to organize them thus, on returning to New England I tried to present myself before an Association in Massachusetts, and they did not know me. They regarded it as a heresy that I should be a Congregationalist coming from the valley of the Mississippi! I say then that Congregationalists were to blame in the beginning.¹²⁵

With whom did Turner discuss "the idea" only to have it "opposed"? With Baldwin? With Beecher and Sturtevant? With Hardy? With John Bergen? One brother threatened to "preach him down if he went through with it." Who that was,

we do not know. Did this challenge drive him to "accede" to his church's wishes? Apparently Turner had not had the faintest idea of doing it before midsummer, 1833. His church at that time was incapable of self-support, and as late as May, 1834, when the church assumed Turner's support on the expiration of his commission from the Society, he said "it was doubtful whether the church would be either *able* or *willing* to raise the whole amount." "They were desired to try, and accordingly made the effort."¹²⁶

It is probable that, although the church numbered only fifty-five members when it assumed his support, a courageous church board accepted the challenge in defense of the pastor's reputation. Probably Turner himself, willing to take a chance on the vote of the congregation, proposed the reorganization. On his own part, he had faithfully discharged his duties toward the Society and the College; the church, if it desired, could take a collection for the Society, and it did.¹²⁷ If Turner deliberately postponed reorganization until Eastern funds had been gathered for the College, he might have had reason to keep silence, but there is not a shred of evidence which points to such an intention on his part. We do not know that Turner applied for a renewal of his commission; nor do we know (if the application was made) what action was taken by the Society. If unfavorable action was taken to punish Turner, no record remains in the papers of the Society.

There is still another factor that might have entered into the making of this clear-cut decision of the Quincy church to become Congregational. During the winter of 1832-1833 two gentlemen (Dr. M. M. L. Reed and Elihu Wolcott) called upon President Beecher and Professor Sturtevant at the College to discuss a serious matter which was brewing in Jacksonville.

"Their object," said Sturtevant, "was to inform us that thirty or forty residents of the town had resolved to organize

a Congregational church, and to invite us to unite in the organization."¹²⁸

Both Beecher and Sturtevant sought vigorously but unsuccessfully to dissuade them. This interview took place some time before the heresy trial which opened on March 28.

"I assured the gentlemen of my growing attachment to the principles of Congregationalism," said Sturtevant, "and my belief that the time for the organization of such a church in our town was not many years distant, yet I joined with Mr. Beecher in deprecating immediate action."

It was obvious (Sturtevant continued) that a sanctuary in which all, whether of Presbyterian or Congregational affinities, might assemble for worship had become an urgent necessity to the Christian cause. Subscriptions were already in circulation to secure such a building, and a site had been selected. I earnestly urged them to remain with the Presbyterian Church and assist in meeting this great present want of the community. I expressed the opinion that the rapid growth of the church would soon justify the formation of a second church, which could be made Congregational and thus their purpose could be accomplished without serious loss to the Master's cause. I assured them that I would then unite with them in the organization. At the close of the interview they again assured us that their object had not been to consult us with reference to the propriety of the step they were about to take, but to invite us to go with them, and that the organization would none the less be effected without us.¹²⁹

It is, of course, possible that these tactics were planned in concert with certain individuals in Quincy who were desirous of reorganization. The Jacksonville church had been without a pastor since the resignation of John M. Ellis (near the close of 1831). Though Theron Baldwin was supplying it off and on, his correspondence is not indicative of any factional, doctrinal, or constitutional dispute. Probably the lay element in both churches dictated the policies. The attitude of a certain group within the Presbyterian church of Jacksonville was, in the light

of conclusive evidence, intransigent. Julian M. Sturtevant mentioned the effect of the heresy trial on popular feeling, and Mr. Frank J. Heintz in our time lays stress on it.¹³⁰ But we dare not reckon without the spirit of divisiveness within the Presbyterian fold. Three weeks before the heresy trial occurred, Mr. David B. Ayers, an elder in that church, wrote to the American Home Missionary Society:

I cannot forbear to tell you knowing you have a great interest in Religion here—there is much trouble in our church and almost certain this church will be divided—the Congregationalists or a part of them forming a separate church, this is expected to be done shortly—and what is to become of the cause of Christ & of souls I tremble for, Brethren Pray for us & may the Lord overrule all for his glory, is my Prayer forever.¹³¹

It is probable that the effects of this agitation were transmitted to Quincy by friends and relatives, and it is possible that a "gentlemen's agreement" was made between the two parties. Since the organization of the "Independent" church of Jacksonville has been attributed to the action of laymen,¹³² action in Quincy may have been taken at the behest of laymen. Asa Turner said that it was.

The most reasonable conclusion is that the Quincy people screwed up their courage and took a long chance on the American Home Missionary Society, and that Turner, finding his congregation predisposed to reorganize and being challenged by the Synod to lend his sanction to this movement, brought suddenly to consummation their desire to take this step. On the basis of the evidence it cannot be said that Turner either initiated the action or had been scheming to take it. Yet his subsequent activities in behalf of Congregationalism in Illinois and in Iowa attest his devotion to its principles.

As has already been indicated, another Congregational church to be organized in 1833 was that of Jacksonville. Agitation to secede from the Presbyterian church was in motion in

the winter of 1832-1833. The heresy trial which began in March dragged into April, and the action of Synod in September, sustaining Fraser's appeal, consolidated popular feeling behind the College professors. The Congregational element in Jacksonville persisted in their purpose to form another church.¹³³ The date was set for its organization, but events now took a curious turn. It was after December 7 that the service committee obtained Asa Turner's acceptance to preach the sermon and conduct the organization of the new church. But at the last minute these plans were amended, since Turner sent word that he could not be present. Straightway the Congregational element implored Professor Sturtevant to conduct the meeting. Now it is not difficult to understand that this demand brought him "some perplexing problems." For a short time he had been commissioned by the American Home Missionary Society, and although he was a Congregationalist, he was a member of the Illinois Presbytery and of the Illinois Synod as well as a generous contributor to the current budget and the building fund of the local Presbyterian church. Intellectually independent, spiritually sensitive, straightforward and fearless, and a firm believer in Congregational principles, Sturtevant was everywhere accepted as a Presbyterian minister.¹³⁴ Earlier in the year he had advised against forming a new church, though he promised to unite with a Congregational church if one should be formed later. By 1832 it had become "very apparent" to him that he was "not alone in (his) dissatisfaction with the Presbyterian Church in its then agitated condition." Continuing in this vein, he wrote:

It (that is to say, the Presbyterian Church generally) seemed to lack the essentials of a spiritual home for persons of New England birth and training. Others beside myself were inclined to suspect that the agitations were largely due to the constitution of that church. The controversy about the 'New Haven Theology' had originated in New England, and might reasonably have been expected to produce there its most dis-

astrous results. Yet it had there expended its utmost force without manifesting any tendency to disrupt religious society. But as soon as the agitation crossed the Hudson and extended itself in the domain of the Presbyterian Church it began to threaten a great division. Immigrants from New England expecting to unite promptly with the Presbyterian Church hesitated in the presence of so much strife. As I have already said, I came to this state with no definite opinions about church government, but the experience of the first three years had compelled me to reflect, with painful earnestness and deep solicitude, upon the foundations of the church.¹³⁵

After spending a day in prayerful reflection Professor Sturtevant agreed to conduct the meeting to organize the Congregational church, though foreseeing that to do so would bring upon him "all the odium which (he) must have encountered by joining the movement."

"If any other body which I recognized as a christian church had made the same request of me, I would have consented without hesitation. Why then should I decline in this instance? Especially when I knew that as soon as the organization was completed I should feel it to be my duty to cooperate with them, as with any other church, in all acts of christian worship."¹³⁶

Under these circumstances—of fear, suspicion, misgivings, and prayerful hopes for the best—the "Independent Church of Jacksonville" was organized on Sunday, December 15, 1833, the service taking place in the Methodist house of worship. A crowded congregation was present "to see and hear what would be done and said."¹³⁷ The Rev. Mr. Starr, the Methodist pastor, and President Beecher, offered prayer, and the Rev. William Carter, a member of the "Illinois Association" at Yale, who had arrived early in November, was asked to preach. Carter delivered the sermon, and was prevailed upon, against his will, to assume pastoral care of the new church for one year.¹³⁸

As Sturtevant approached the formal organization he stated that he would not hesitate to perform such an act at the request of any Christian church, and that he heartily approved the principles of government and discipline which the church was about to adopt. "I made this last declaration very deliberately, and with careful forethought," said Sturtevant.

I was already fully aware that if I was to be tolerated in this community, it must be as a man of avowed Congregational predilections. I thought that I could have no better opportunity to make the declaration of my independence. I therefore made it explicitly then and there. I did it with a very clear foresight of its bearing on my reputation and influence. It was the part of manly honesty, and I have never doubted the part of true wisdom. It has decidedly tinged the complexion of my life from that day to this.¹³⁹

The Jacksonville church recently has credited its organization to the "initiative (of) a group of laymen, chiefly from Connecticut, who were loyal to the principles and polity of the church of their New England home, and who simply would not allow themselves to be decongregationalized."¹⁴⁰

It is our bounden duty to examine the validity of this claim. In this connection it will be recalled that two laymen in the Presbyterian church (Dr. M. M. L. Reed and Elihu Wolcott) interviewed President Beecher and Professor Sturtevant early in the winter before the heresy trial was under way, and that Mr. Ayers, a member of the session, warned the American Home Missionary Society of the impending secession of the Congregational element. The heresy trial went far to realign public sentiment, but apparently the formation of the Congregational church of Mendon was unrelated to affairs in Jacksonville. It is not improbable, however, that the reorganization of the Presbyterian church of Quincy (October 10) buoyed the hopes of the Congregational faction in Jacksonville; and it is to be noticed that three of the five

families who emigrated with the Chittendens in 1831 were participants in the formation of all three of these Congregational churches, namely, the Samuel Bradleys, the John B. Chittendens, and the Abraham Clarks.¹⁴¹ The purpose to form a rival church in Jacksonville waxed strong, service and finance committees were constituted, the place of worship was appointed for the organization, and the speaker was engaged. These committees met to perfect arrangements at least four times between November 8 and December 14, and on the latter date Sturtevant and Carter met with them to approve the letters of dismission of the twenty-two Congregationalists from the Presbyterian church.¹⁴²

The Rev. William Carter, who was sent by the American Home Missionary Society to Illinois in November, was stationed at Winchester, Exeter, and Naples. Since it was customary to direct a new missionary to the more experienced brethren for instructions, the Society referred Carter to its agent, Theron Baldwin.¹⁴³ But the Jacksonville Congregationalists called him and with "very strong feelings" against leaving his chosen field he took charge of the Independent church. One month after its organization he wrote to the Society:

I arrived at Winchester Morgan Co—on the 3rd of November last, where I resided until the close of the year. My field of labor was Winchester, Exeter & Naples. I preached however in the last two places but once each & once at Jacksonville. During the remainder of the time I preached at Winchester. This is a flourishing little village which has sprung up within a few years. I bestowed more labor here than in the other places, hoping by continued efforts & oft repeated, I might see fruit of my labor; having but little expectation of such a result where the gospel is preached only once in 3 or 4 sabbaths. I did not however intend to neglect the other places, but give them their share in their season. I was encouraged both by the attendance & attention of the people at W— And so I was at Exeter & perhaps should have been at Naples had it not been a stormy day.

But I have left that field with very strong feelings of regret. It pleased me as well as any I could have selected. And my feelings were very strong against leaving it, & my judgment too: but I finally yielded to the opinions of those to whom my commission referred me for advice & to my own sense of duty. Right or wrong I have left it.

You have probably heard that a new congregational church has been formed at Jacksonville. You may remember the views I once expressed to you on the general subject of forming Congregational churches in this state at present. I remain essentially of the same opinion still. This opinion I have expressed here repeatedly & endeavor to maintain.

I thought it was premature at least & better on the whole that they should remain contented & united as they were. I had conversation with leading men among the Congregationalists soon after my arrival & expressed my views more strongly than I have ever before. But it was too late. It was not for me to have influence in quelling or agitating the discussion of this question. *Actum est.* It was discussed & decided before I set foot on Illinois. I was told that nothing but Divine efficiency would prevent it. I replied that in my opinion *moral* influence *ought*. Here, except a few discussions of the subject on principle with some of my brethren, I have ceased my opposition; having learned before this that if we cannot have things as we would we must take them as they are & make the best of them. The church was to be formed & I was applied to, to assist in the organization & to preach a sermon on the occasion. And who was I, born a Congregationalist & nurtured in the lap of Congregationalism, that I should refuse. Had I done so, I should never have dared to look my N. England brethren & Fathers in the face again; as I hope to do if God spares my life. Moreover I would have done the same thing for the Methodists or Baptists or Episcopalians or any other *evangelical* denomination.

A Methodist brother assisted us. Mr. Sturtevant also aided us. Br. Baldwin went to Naples & fulfilled an appointment of mine on that day. The occasion was one of deep & universal interest. Even those who did not attend (the exercises were in the Methodist meeting-house!—the largest in the place & full to overflowing) were not without feelings of interest on the sub-

ject. I am much mistaken if the impression made upon the public mind was not good.

Our whole aim was to make the impression that *Christian character* is everything & to inculcate love of this character whenever and wherever found—*Christian love*. The constitution of this church & its articles of faith & covenant are remarkably simple—much like that of the church in Yale College if you know what that is. Its terms are professedly such that any person giving credible evidence of piety can unite with them. And here I find myself at the head of them endeavoring to discharge the duties of a pastor. You will understand I presume from what I have stated, how I could on principle, if I thought I could be most useful here. I concluded to try for a time.

(I in)tend to put my hand & my heart into the work, not of Congregationalism but of Christianising this people. I leave when I think best. There are more than 30 members. They will give me ample support. The other church will support a minister as soon as they can get one. Either church will now do more towards supporting the Gospel at home & abroad than they *would* both together before—*would*, not *could* or *ought*. Whilst there has been some feeling as was to be expected, there has been & is I think a good deal of Christian feeling & principle exhibited on both sides: And I have no question that they will soon settle down into more union of feeling & action than ever before. Considering the *actual state of things* I do not know but the separation was best. The evils *here* I do not believe will be so great as has been anticipated by some. In this respect my views have been modified. I feel for you, though after all it won't hurt you nor me. The people will be congregationalists if they choose & we cannot help it. The responsibility of a change is *on them*. And once established the *ism* is as good as any *ism*—and better adapted I am persuaded to the genius of the people & less obnoxious to their prejudices.

Both churches now I hope are praying & laboring for a revival. This communication is not designed for the public but for you my Dear Brother. I felt that I was bound to give you a full statement of what has transpired—of my own course & my reasons for it. I may have acted unwisely but I hope

not & think not. At least I have wished to know the path of duty.

As to compensation for the two months labor, it is not a matter of great importance though I think I ought to receive it—needing it enough I do not however set a high value upon my labors, not seeing many important results from them. I hope & trust that you will not think the fact of my connecting myself with this Congregational church is a reason why I should not receive compensation. That would be an extremely unfortunate conclusion I think. If I think I can be useful here I may stay—else I shall quit. Will you ever take me under your patronage again? If not I will preach at my own charge while I can & then go where the laborer is deemed worthy of his hire. But you will if it be necessary, I have no doubt. I wish you would write to me as soon as convenient—write if you please *in propria persona* though it be but few words. With as much respect & love as ever I remain Your Brother in the Lord.¹⁴⁴

To be sure, the arrangements for the organization of the Jacksonville church were practically complete by the time of Carter's arrival. Several questions must now be raised. Did someone other than Theron Baldwin advise William Carter? Had Baldwin been invited to attend the organization of the new church? At any rate, he was at Naples caring for Carter's appointments. Had his schedule been so rearranged as to deprive the Independent Church of the sanction of the American Home Missionary Society? Baldwin must have made out a full report of the affair in his letter to Absalom Peters of January 31, 1834, but unfortunately this letter is not extant. But Peters, in reply, deprecated the factious spirit that eventuated in the organization of the Congregational church.¹⁴⁵

Carter, like Sturtevant, found himself confronted with the necessity of giving an immediate decision. He saw neither logical nor moral reason against lending aid when it was asked for. Peters hoped Carter could be prevailed upon to serve the Presbyterian church in Jacksonville from which the Congregational element had seceded, but something drew him to

Winchester, probably a disinclination on his part to become involved in a controversy at the outset of his Christian ministry. Carter also conferred with Sturtevant, probably upon his arrival. It would appear that Sturtevant urged him to serve the Presbyterian church (which he knew was threatened with division) as a means of composing its factions, or to go with the Congregationalists if they succeeded in forming a rival organization. It would appear that Carter countered with the proposal that he and Sturtevant temporarily share the preaching for the Presbyterians. So he put the matter:

Subsequent reflection has inclined me to think it inexpedient for me to enter into the arrangement you proposed yesterday. I cannot but think that greater good could be effected by my preaching where they would otherwise be destitute. Now many congregations in the county may be collected on the Sabbath larger than you have at the College—congregations too which I have reason to believe would be more benefitted by my preaching. And what is to be set off against this consideration? Why the congregation in town might be more benefitted by the continuous labors of one man, than by a regular exchange. This difference in the case of a temporary supply for a few weeks, approximates an infinitesimal—And I have no doubt that if *you* will preach for them half the time, in the minds of the people it will vanish—And very likely come out a quantity of some magnitude on the other side. That such an exchange can be effected & that with great satisfaction to the "*Jacksonville Presbyterian Church*" that is to be, I have no doubt—So far as those Presbyterian brethren who were once Congregationalists are concerned, I know it would be most gratifying (and I will become responsible for the injury they suffer.) For it would not be strange if they should look up to you as their ecclesiastical father—Should you feel that I am bound by the conversation we had yesterday, I should not feel at liberty to refuse to fulfill the obligation—But I have supposed that by making this communication thus early, you would be subjected to no additional inconvenience.¹⁴⁶

Neither the *Annual Report* nor the *Home Missionary* has

a word to say about the organization of Congregational churches in Illinois, nor does the Society's Letter Book (which is intact) contain an answer to Carter's letter of January 13, 1834. If Peters wrote *in propria persona*, as Carter asked him to do, the letter has not turned up.

Julian Sturtevant said in 1883:

It is often said that all the conflicts and divisions of the church are instigated and urged on by ministers. That was not true in this instance. The founding of this church originated wholly with the laity. The ministers had nothing at all to do with it, except to dissuade from it. I was not consulted before the step was taken, in reference to the propriety of taking it—I was told at the very outset that the thing was irrevocably determined on—but only as to my own disposition to unite in the congregation. My answer was that I was in hearty sympathy with them in respect to the desirableness of standing by the polity of our fathers in our western home; but that I thought that the division of Presbyterians and Congregationalists into two churches at that time, would be a great calamity. I could not then favor it. If they would wait till we were strong enough for two churches, I would then gladly go with them. Pres. Beecher, though equally in sympathy with Congregational principles with myself, took a decided stand against the measure. They firmly replied: The thing will be done without you.¹⁴⁷

How much Sturtevant meanwhile encouraged the measure is unknown, but immediately after the formation of the Independent Church his support became aggressive. He forthrightly commended the new organization to the regard of intimate New Haven friends, none other than Professors Taylor and Goodrich of Yale, and Dr. Leonard Bacon, pastor of the Center Church. Undoubtedly to them he expressed himself more freely than to his Illinois brethren.

Sturtevant, two weeks after the church was formed, wrote: Suffer me to introduce to your acquaintance Elihu Wolcott Esq a gentleman for whom I entertain a high respect both as

a Christian and a citizen—At the same time suffer me to invite your attention to the circumstances under which Mr. Wolcott visits your city—There is in all this section of country a growing dissatisfaction with the constitution discipline and present condition of the Presbyterian Church—and an increasing disposition to adopt the more simple & more scriptural forms of the venerable Fathers of New England—Several such churches have already been formed among us—and we cannot but think it desirable that the movement should be an extensive one. It is the foundations of many generations that we are laying—we stand at the head of a mighty river of moral influence—at which millions yet unborn shall drink—The public sentiment—and the religious Institutions which the present generation shall form and transmit to posterity must exert an incalculable influence upon the future character and destinies of the untold millions who are to follow us—

And if it is a blessing to New England that the Pilgrims planted there the pure and simple principles of Congregationalism—can we be justified in not planting in *this infant community* the same principles & in transmitting to posterity another and far less valuable system—I know my views differ from those of many of my brethren on this point—but in this vicinity I am not alone in the conviction that the Presbyterian system is at this moment wholly unsuited to the wants of the West—and that it is an *incubus* upon the efforts of Christian benevolence for ‘the valley’ and that to be successful in that enterprise Christians must adopt more liberal principles and a simpler form of government.

With views like these a Church has been recently organized in this village on Congregational principles. It is as yet small consisting of 32 members—but I trust it will show itself strong in the grace of God & rich in good works. If I am right in the opinions which I have stated above—this movement is one of great importance to our infant community. So prominent and commanding is the position occupied by this little company of the children of the pilgrims that on the success or failure of this experiment will depend greatly the probable progress of similar views and principles in the region around us. Others will be encouraged or disheartened as *they* succeed or fail—

Of their success—I entertain no doubt provided they can procure the labors of a suitable pastor and erect a suitable edifice for religious worship—For the former of these objects they have invited Rev. Wm. Carter to labor among them—Should he accept this point is I trust gained. Should he decline it will leave open for some servant of God such a field of usefulness as I know not another—in the whole region around us. And it is my prayer to the great Head of the Church that a man after God’s own heart may speedily be sent to occupy it. As to the erection of a house for worship—their resources are inadequate—and the object is one of preeminent importance to the enterprise—they need help in erecting it—but whether it will be practicable to obtain it or expedient to ask for it you gentlemen can judge much better than I—Mr. Wolcott is a member of the infant church which I have been describing and I shall now dismiss the subject by commending him to you & your Christian kindness counsels & assistance—With sentiments of esteem Yours &c.¹⁴⁸

It is to be noticed that Sturtevant does not speak of the influence of laymen in this connection, but he does not deny that the ministers in the vicinity were desirous of returning to Congregationalism. Indeed, he implies that the “growing dissatisfaction” was entertained chiefly by the ministers, who naturally would be the most intimately affected by the “constitution, discipline, and present condition of the Presbyterian Church.” Still he does not cite individuals who may have intervened in Quincy and Jacksonville.

To sum up: the evidence for the organization of the Independent Church of Jacksonville as the outcome of lay dissatisfaction and grievances comes from David B. Ayers, a member of the session of the Presbyterian church which dismissed the twenty-two Congregationalists, from Professor Sturtevant, and from Rev. William Carter, the *ad interim* pastor of the new church. Mr. Ayers prepared his communication to the American Home Missionary Society three weeks before the first round of the heresy trial took place, while the

purpose of the Congregational element was forming. William Carter wrote in November, 1833 (it is supposed), in January, 1834, and in 1860. Professor Sturtevant described the situation in January, 1834, and enlarged his account in August, 1845, in August, 1855, in December, 1883, and in 1886.

It may be fairly assumed that Mr. Ayers honestly represented the situation within the Presbyterian church when the Congregationalists were casting about for sanctions for their cause. The evidence from two of the principal actors in the organization of the new church is not necessarily rendered untrustworthy for that fact. No evidence has been found that would lend support to the view that the ministers played a large part in directing the Congregational movement to its goal.

The reasonable conclusion is that laymen projected the organization of the Independent Church and carried their plans through to the consummation, securing, at the very last, the support of Sturtevant and Carter.

The significance of this revolution which brought the organization of the first Congregational churches in Illinois, though not at once apparent, was three-fold.

First: the assertion of the right of self-determination on the part of Congregational laymen and ministers with respect to the form of church government was gaining ground not only in Illinois but in Michigan and Indiana as well. The assertion of this right (which met strenuous opposition) had been on the upgrade in Michigan ever since Isaac W. Ruggles founded the first Congregational church in the Territory at Farmington in 1825; John D. Pierce (who was intimidated) contributed to its resurgence by founding additional Congregational churches after 1831.¹⁴⁹ In Indiana the first Congregational church which is known to have been formed originated in

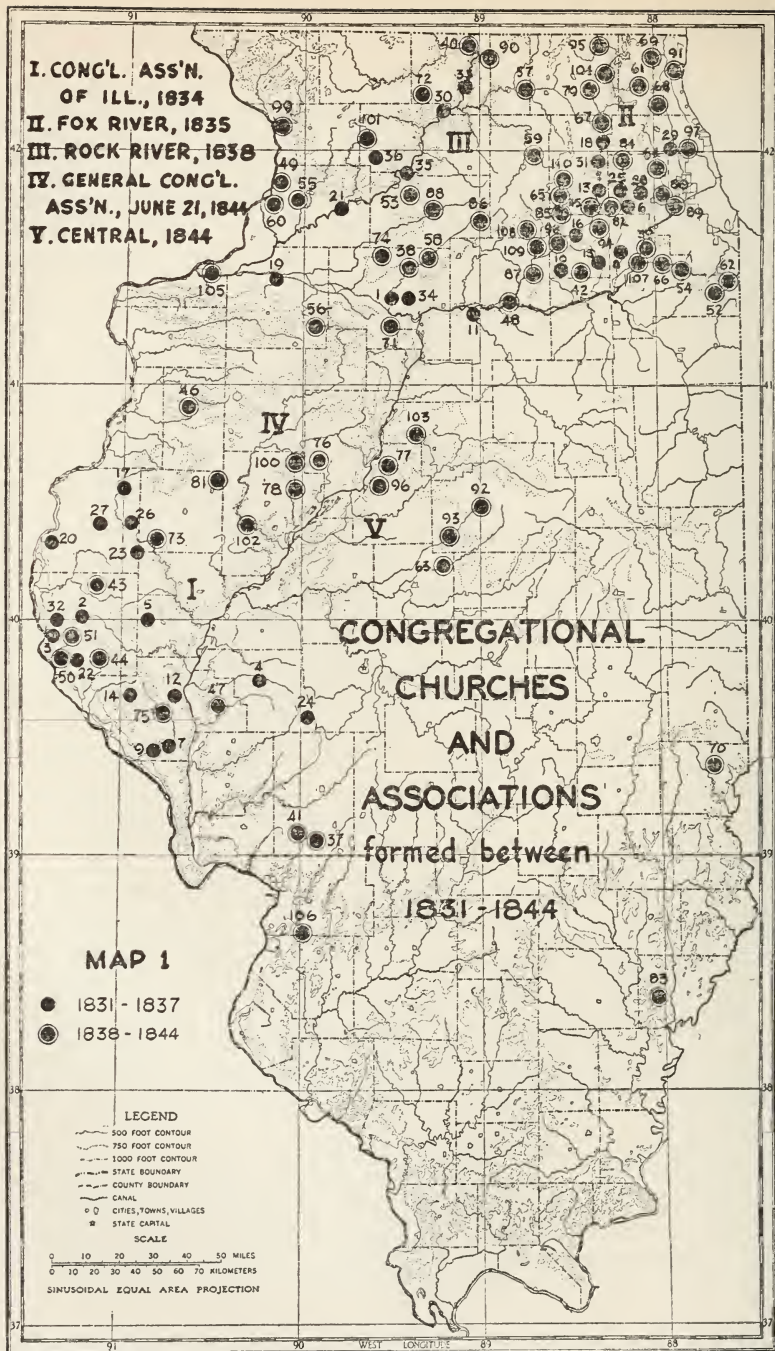
a dispute in the Presbyterian church at Bath in Franklin County, not far from Oxford, Ohio, where in 1833 Archibald Craig, an American Home Missionary Society representative, attempted to bolt the doors against the Congregational members. This church had been well pleased with the preaching of one Peter Crocker who had bought a farm in the vicinity and cared for the church by leave of the Presbytery. Jealousy between Craig and Crocker, the latter being a Congregationalist from Falmouth, Massachusetts, appears to have been at the bottom of the division which resulted from a discussion of Old School-New School Presbyterian concerns. Twenty of the Congregationalists requested Crocker to organize a Congregational church, which he did.¹⁵⁰ A building 30x50 feet was erected and in 1836, when Moses H. Wilder became pastor (Crocker having assumed the pastorate of the Richmond Congregational church, organized in 1835), the church was in a strong and healthy condition.¹⁵¹ The revolution in Illinois was part and parcel of this increasing self-awareness.

Second: the Plan of Union of 1801 operated in a manner different from several possible interpretations of that charter, in that for over thirty years more Presbyterian than Congregational churches were formed in the West. In Illinois no so-called Plan of Union churches, governed by standing-committees, were formed as in Ohio, Michigan, and New York; all were strictly Presbyterian, though Congregationalists composed them and Congregational ministers served them. One may not be dogmatic about the original intentions and objectives of those who framed the Plan of Union, but assuredly the Plan was open to diverse interpretations. At any rate, the revolution which began about 1825 gained momentum in the 1830's. But in essence this was not a revolt against the published objectives and terms of the Plan of Union (for even Sturtevant believed in these). It consisted, rather, in exposing and denying the presumption that Congregationalists

were not expected to organize any churches while Presbyterians were obliged to form them in accord with their Constitution. Not only did Presbyterians believe this, but Congregationalists, especially in Connecticut, fathered the notion that Congregationalism was not intended for the West. Presbyterian dissatisfaction with, and fear of, the Plan of Union and those churches which were composed in line with its published terms, cropped out in the General Assembly of 1826 and an action was taken, year by year, looking toward the sloughing off of the Congregational elements in the Western churches or their assimilation to the constitutional standards of the Presbyterian Church, irrespective of Plan of Union terms. With the wider dispersion of Congregationalists, however, the right of self-determination was more and more asserted, while within the General Assembly itself a party was ascending to power which demanded a choice between toleration, assimilation, or excision of that element which its leaders regarded as polluting its life. For years before the Presbyterian schism in 1837-1838 the Congregationalists, sociologically speaking, were the "out-group" in the Western churches, but it required a third of a century for a persecution-complex to be generated.

Third: insofar as the American Home Missionary Society was involved, the Michigan missionaries were made to suffer for Congregationalism, but the pastors of the first Congregational churches in Illinois were supported by congregations which were willing, if necessary, to run the risk of doing without the Society funds. As more and more Congregational churches were organized in Illinois, the Society strove to be neutral.

Although at least five Congregational churches had been formed by the end of 1833, no one could forecast the expansion which another decade was to bring. Yet many were determined that that crucial year had not brought forth in vain.



Based on Goode Base Map No. 254. By permission of the University of Chicago Press.

CHAPTER III

EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL CONGREGATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

The operations in Illinois of the Missionary Society of Connecticut, which were sharply curtailed after the formation of the American Home Missionary Society, were slightly increased between 1836 and 1842, but, as previously, the majority of its men were found on the Western Reserve. In 1836, one missionary was sent to Illinois and in 1837, two; in 1838, six, and in 1839-1842, five of its workers served at various points.¹ The officers of the Connecticut Conference of Congregational and Christian Churches have supplied the information that the venerable Society rendered aid, at various times between 1833 and 1844, to William Carter, William Kirby, Ithamar Pillsbury, William F. Vaill, William Whittlesey, and Jonathan A. Woodruff.

Late in 1838 Carter removed from Jacksonville to Pittsfield, where he persuaded the Presbyterian church to become Congregational in 1841. From 1838 to 1847 Kirby was pastor of the Congregational church of Mendon. Pillsbury and Vaill were engaged near Andover and Wethersfield in exploring the country and negotiating for lands for Connecticut colonists who, on reaching Illinois, made good prospects for Congregational churches.

Doubtless there were strong reactions at the home base to the conversion to Congregational churches of many of the

Presbyterian churches which their predecessors had founded. Yet in 1836 the General Association of Connecticut went on record as follows:

Whether a change of circumstances renders a change proper, in the mode of organizing churches, by the Missionaries to be hereafter employed by this Society, is a point respecting which there may be a diversity of sentiment. Were the Plan of Union, which has been the medium of so cheering results to be abandoned, the limited resources still at the command of this venerable Society, might be employed in the formation of churches after the model adopted by our forefathers, and which has been proved, by long experience, to be efficient and salutary. The banner of Congregationalism which floats so magnificently over the hills and valleys of New England, we might hope, would not droop, if it should be thought expedient, from a change of circumstances, to have this banner unfolded hereafter, by our Missionaries, to the breezes of the West. There, as here, it would wave, an emblem of brotherhood and peace.²

Even though the General Association of Connecticut was primarily responsible for the introduction and the dominance of Presbyterianism at the West, especially in Illinois, the Presbyterian General Assembly feared the infiltration of Congregationally-trained ministers, and the Plan of Union of 1801 was abrogated in 1837. The Assembly also severed relations with the American Home Missionary Society and, adding insult to injury, excised four synods—Western Reserve, Utica, Geneva, and Genesee—in an Old School major victory.³ The grief of the General Association was mitigated by the reflection that this abrupt termination of relations was due, not to “error in doctrine,” but only to the fact that the Plan of Union churches, presbyteries, and synods lacked “a complete Presbyterian organization.” Thus, since “its labors in the Western Reserve had not been in vain,” self-confidence and self-congratulation were in order, and the Missionary Society of Connecticut piously continued to make “benefactions to

these churches, as constituting an interesting part of the body of Christ."⁴

The Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church continued to pour its mighty energies into the spiritual development of the nation as a whole; by 1835, portions of the Lord's vineyard in nineteen states and territories were under cultivation by 224 of its men. In 1837, the 272 missionaries who labored in twenty states and territories received \$26,000; in 1845, eight years after the Presbyterian schism, \$40,000 was expended for the service of 349 (Old School) missionaries in twenty states and territories.⁵ A number of these men worked in southern Illinois, but few of them reached the northern half of the state.

In this period the great expansion was conducted in the West by the American Home Missionary Society, which quadrupled its personnel in Illinois, their number reaching ninety-five in 1844-1845. Prior to the Presbyterian schism the majority ministered to Presbyterian churches; following the schism many ministers switched to Congregational churches. By and large, the fields of operation were the western-central and northern portions of the state, although the Society gave the Board of Missions some competition in the southern half. By the end of this period every one of the fourteen northernmost counties had been provided with missionaries;⁶ but its operations in Illinois were merely a phase of the Society's widening interest. In 1833 entreaties were received from Fort Winnebago and Fort Howard in Michigan Territory that missionaries "of talents, of gentlemanly deportment, of liberal principles, and of ardent piety" be sent to soldiers who were "inquiring their way to Zion."⁷ In 1835 the first missionary reached Milwaukee where a part of the population was friendly to religion, though "a strong sweeping current of worldly enterprise, a rush and scramble after wealth," was reported.⁸ At Racine, inhabitants from New York and New

England "appeared to be friends of the Redeemer," but many were "enemies of the Cross."⁹ By 1838, missionaries were being sent into the Iowa Territory, where Asa Turner founded the church at Denmark. Though Illinois was being more intensively cultivated, the Society gallantly followed the tide of immigration to the new lands which the government was placing on the market, despite the economic convulsions through which the nation was then passing. It lost no time in penetrating the West, which Lyman Beecher called "a young empire of mind, and power, and wealth, and free institutions, rushing up to a giant manhood, with a rapidity and a power never before witnessed below the sun."¹⁰ Perhaps the best expression of the philosophy of the task was given by Theron Baldwin at Cincinnati in 1835 when he described a little church in the Mississippi valley as "a mind thrown into that place, and there, under God it became the center of a little moral system, and sent out light and heat over the whole!" Baldwin saw "more than two hundred of these little moral systems in the valley," and earnestly hoped for resources wherewith "to bespangle the whole valley with these little moral centers."¹¹ Another who competently expressed it was Albert Hale of Illinois, who said it was "preeminently a work for faithful perseverance, rather than splendid achievement." "When our results are richest," he continued, "there is little to gratify the thirst for novelty; although the heart of considerate piety has occasion to rejoice in the progress of the work which regulates the very principles of society, consolidates all good institutions, and prepares men for the awards of the eternal state."¹²

A very important development was the appointment of missionary agents who traveled thousands of miles annually on horseback or in wagons to reach remote spots and recommend the placement of men. Theron Baldwin served in Jacksonville after 1832, but in 1835 he helped to found the Mon-

ticello Female Seminary when Captain Benjamin Godfrey of Alton dedicated his wealth to that institution.¹³ This meant the termination of Baldwin's agency, in which he was succeeded by Albert Hale, another member of the Yale Band, who removed to Springfield where he served the New School Presbyterian church. Another agent was Flavel Bascom, also a member of the "Illinois Association," who had served in the vicinity of Peoria since 1833. As the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago from 1840 to 1849, Bascom reserved a portion of his time for the missionary agency, organizing numerous churches in the upper Fox River Valley.¹⁴ Bascom and his great church were hosts upon occasion to conferences of Presbyterians and Congregationalists who sought to organize a Convention similar to that in the Wisconsin Territory; and the Illinois State Anti-Slavery Society held its fifth annual meeting in its rooms in 1842.¹⁵ Baldwin, Hale, and Bascom were equally determined foes of slavery, though Bascom and Hale were more radical in backing abolitionist measures than was Baldwin.

While the missionaries in the Old Northwest were conscious of being identified with a new section, there was no doubt in their minds about the necessity for planting character-building institutions to strengthen the nation. Lyman Beecher's stentorian *Plea for the West* was by no means the only voice rallying the moral character of this region. Far-seeing men, understanding that material and spiritual development go hand in hand, were concerned for the primacy of moral and literary institutions.

If at times there was opposition to Roman Catholicism, prompted by fear of its extension, this was, on the whole, a secondary consideration with the American Home Missionary Society.¹⁶ It is true that John M. Ellis, Theron Baldwin, John F. Brooks and others in the neighborhood of predominantly Catholic settlements occasionally spoke of erecting

Protestant institutions as "batteries of light to beat back the invader";¹⁷ it is also true that ministers who served under the American Home Missionary Society not infrequently campaigned as vigorously to refute what they regarded as the errors and pretensions of Baptists, Free Will Baptists, Methodists, Cumberland Presbyterians, Campbellites, Unitarians, Universalists, Mormons, Perfectionists, Unionists, and atheists as against the rising estate of the Church of Rome.

Home missionaries not infrequently regarded themselves as the bearers of the true religion, places otherwise provided for religious service being sometimes listed by them as "destitute." In most instances, a distinct New England flavor was imparted, seeing that the Congregational element generally sought to transplant the folkways and institutions of New England. Revivals, protracted meetings, concerts of prayer for the conversion of the world, temperance, missionary, and Bible societies, Sunday schools, and other educational interests were means to stiffen the moral fibre.

The economic dislocations wrought by the Panic of 1837¹⁸ forced upon the American Home Missionary Society "the necessity of allowing the rapid expenditure of funds in hand to meet the current demands upon the treasury without any immediate prospects of its being replenished."¹⁹ It was an anxious time for missionary families forced to "surrender the ordinary comforts of life and (be) reduced for weeks to a bare subsistence." To part with "articles of taste, and the pledges of affection, and even with portions of their clothing, to procure bread for their children" was the extent of their earthly reward. Their descendants may hope that they received an eternal one. Yet "God interposed with deliverance; and, above all, richly bestowed the influences of his Spirit."²⁰

Flavel Bascom found that ministers were compelled to leave their people, that pledges which had been made "on a noble scale of liberality" had to be canceled. "An entire revo-

lution has passed over us," he said. "Immigration has been greatly diminished, property is unsaleable, the produce of farms on which they relied for means to support their families and to pay for their lands, will scarcely defray the expense of carrying it to market."²¹ Still, there had not been a period "since the first settlement of this state, when individuals and communities, hitherto irreligious, were so accessible to the influences of religion."

In 1844, Aratus Kent noted, as "the effect of gospel husbandry bestowed on this great and fertile state," the erection of twenty-five churches within 200 miles of the Galena mining country, which were as "spots of verdure redeemed from the wilderness, on many of which the dews of grace have recently fallen in a peculiar degree."²² "Some, among the most hopeless cases" which Kent had seen were "now sitting meek and penitent at the feet of Jesus."²³

The geographic extension of Congregationalism up to 1844 was remarkable. To be sure, the Puritan stronghold of Jacksonville was the residence of a number of Congregational ministers and professors (most of whom designated themselves as Presbyterian)—John M. Ellis, Julian M. Sturtevant, Edward Beecher, William Kirby, William Carter, Jonathan B. Turner, Truman M. Post, and Theron Baldwin all being established there. Other members of the "Illinois Association," however, and scores of ministers serving the American Home Missionary Society, labored from the outset in widely separated regions. Far from being confined to a given region, the Presbyterian churches which they founded were widely diffused and, even before the Presbyterian schism, Congregational churches were common to the western-central and northern sections.

The expansion and development of Congregationalism between 1831 and 1844 are indicated by a determined drive to plant the churches of this faith which by no means spent its

force in the western-central section, in spite of the fact that Asa Turner organized there thirteen churches.²⁴ In the northern section also (above the 41st parallel, let us say), an aggressive temper exhibited itself. In fairness, it must be noted that the vitality and independence which accounted, on the one hand, for the founding of twenty-odd churches in the western-central section, secured impressive developments, on the other hand, in the enormous region between the Des Plaines and the Mississippi rivers and from Peru to the Territory of Wisconsin.

Between 1831 and 1837 (from the arrival of the Hampshire Colony Church to the abrogation of the Plan of Union), at least thirty-six Congregational churches were formed, and this pioneering bore nearly equal fruitage in both regions. South of the great bend in the Illinois and the northern extremity of the Military Tract, sixteen churches were formed, while twenty were brought into existence above that latitude. (See Table 1, ¹⁰⁴.)

Between 1838 and 1844 (from the Presbyterian schism to the formation of the General Congregational Association), the Congregational center of gravity was shifted to the north while at least seventy-four more churches were being organized. (See Table 2, ¹⁰⁵.)

Of the grand total of one hundred and ten churches which were formed between 1831 and 1844, seventy-one were north of the great bend in the Illinois River and the Military Tract, while thirty-nine were in various parts of the state below those lines. Of these thirty-nine churches, twenty-six were in the counties of the Military Tract, five were east or southeast of Peoria, three were in the vicinity of Jacksonville, three clustered around Alton, one was at Marshall, ten miles west of Terre Haute, Indiana, and one was at Albion in Edwards County. (See Tables 1 and 2 and Map 1 on page 64.)

The number of Congregational churches in existence

when the General Association was formed in 1844 remains unknown, but it was undoubtedly larger than sixty-four (Whittlesey's estimate in 1869).²⁵ Flavel Bascom's comment, "We were still a comparatively feeble folk," is ambiguous.²⁶

It is an arresting fact that in 1940, sixty-five churches which had been founded between 1830 and 1844 were affiliated with the Congregational and Christian Conference of Illinois. Of these sixty-five churches, forty-nine were functioning as Congregational, eleven as Presbyterian, and five as Christian in 1844. (See Table 3,¹⁰⁶.) At least one hundred and ten Congregational churches had been formed up to the end of 1844 (1831, one; 1833, four; 1834, seven; 1835, four; 1836, thirteen; 1837, seven; 1838, eleven; 1839, nine; 1840, ten; 1841, ten; 1842, seven; 1843, twenty-one; 1844, six); how many had fallen by the wayside is not known. The number of churches which were functioning as Congregational when the General Association was organized probably stood between eighty and eighty-five.

To this expansion, the churches in the western-central section rendered invaluable service—by planting new churches, by founding an Association in 1834, and by helping to form the General Association in 1844. In this connection, the service of Asa Turner in organizing thirteen churches is to be noted, though he performed it despite the censure of his brethren in the Presbytery of Schuyler.²⁷ The activity of David Nelson in the Mission Institutes near Quincy is also to be noted, especially since these schools did much to solidify the anti-slavery opinion in spite of the fact that one of these buildings was burned by a Missouri mob in March, 1843.²⁸ The great service of Theron Baldwin who, though not then professing to be a Congregationalist, was Principal of Monticello Female Seminary from 1838 to 1843,²⁹ and the intimate association of Elijah and Owen Lovejoy with the members of Illinois College faculty in forming the Illinois State Antislavery So-

ciety, are indicative of Congregational vitality. The gallant service of William Kirby, Edward Beecher, Jonathan B. Turner, and Elihu Wolcott as the antislavery struggle increased in intensity must not be left without a notice; Illinois College, which early became identified with this struggle, found its growth and prosperity checked because of the consistently antislavery stand of its faculty.³⁰

For a number of reasons the region above Peru became the home of the overwhelming majority of the Congregational churches, and, as an illustration of their extension, the only counties which lacked Congregational churches in 1844 were Jo Daviess and Stephenson.³¹

One of these was in the progress of settlement.³² The settlement of the Military Tract had been unduly retarded by speculation. The relative inaccessibility of this region also restricted efforts to form churches of a Puritan tradition, but Methodist circuit-riders were fairly successful, and a number of Presbyterian and Cumberland Presbyterian churches also took form. An epidemic of the cholera, occurring in 1833, took a terrific toll and drove northward hundreds of settlers who remained in the healthier latitude. The growth of the counties of Morgan, Green, Scott, and Cass to the east of the Military Tract was set back by the Panic of 1837, which severely depressed economic life in Illinois until 1843. While, indeed, the population of the Military Tract swelled from 39,000 in 1835 to 141,000 in 1845 (5,000 Mormons coming in 1839 alone, and an estimated 15,000 Mormons settling in Hancock and adjacent counties by 1842), the settlement of the region north of the great bend of the Illinois was gaining at a swifter pace. Although their growth was held back by the Indian menace which culminated in the Black Hawk War in 1832, the fourteen northernmost counties rose sharply from 16,000 in 1835 to 142,000 in 1845.

Another factor was the rise of commerce which lifted

La Salle and Ottawa to positions of greater importance than older towns further down the Illinois; and as a result of lake shipping out of Milwaukee and Chicago, which increased after 1840, St. Louis was reduced in importance as a point of trans-shipment for Illinois. These economic changes were accompanied by the disappearance and decline of many towns along the Illinois River which had facilitated the settlement of the interior in the previous decades.

A crucially important factor was the character of immigration. Tens of thousands of settlers came from New England states to live in the beautiful river valleys of the northern sector. To be sure, Easterners settled in the Military Tract as well, but the ease of access to the northern area which the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes provided, diverted the trend of settlement to the north, and, despite the Panic of 1837, brought many solid settlements above the rapids of the Illinois. Between 1836 and 1841 the extension of Congregationalism was promoted by numerous land-buying colonists from the East who established settlements and churches at Geneseo, Wethersfield, Providence, Galesburg, Rockford, Lyndon, and elsewhere.

Likewise were the efforts to form Congregational churches accelerated by Nathaniel C. Clark, Alfred Greenwood, Flavel Bascom, Lucien Farnam, and William B. Dodge among others. Clark founded at least twenty-seven Congregational churches in the Fox River Valley,³³ while Dodge was taking charge of Sunday schools and churches in the region where the Millburn church (founded by Bascom in 1841) attests his unsparing devotion to Congregational principles. Flavel Bascom, in his capacity as an agent for the American Home Missionary Society, though not professing to be a Congregationalist, fostered the growth of Congregational churches in the upper Fox River Valley and near Chicago. In 1834 Greenwood formed the Plainfield church and several others in north-

eastern La Salle County (now southern Kendall County), and accounted almost single-handed for the organization of the Fox River Congregational Union at Big Grove in the following year. The arrival of numerous Oberlin graduates after 1838, who brought their own brand of Congregationalism, added to the denominational development.³⁴

Moreover, following the abrogation of the Plan of Union, clusters of Congregational churches, many of them Presbyterian in origin, sprang up all over the region above Peru, although a few, in sympathy with the Old School party, dropped from Congregational ranks to become Presbyterian. While Congregational energy, loyalty, and treasure were securely built into many Presbyterian churches, pastors, and laymen of both denominations co-operating in furthering Christian institutions, Congregationalism continued to gain as churches were set out from foci like Elgin, Peoria, Ottawa, Rockford, Plainfield, Naperville, and others. From one end of the Rock River Valley to the other, and along the banks of the Mississippi from Moline to Savanna, Congregational churches were organized between 1834 and 1844. While there was no Congregational church in Chicago until 1851, numerous Congregational churches were founded after 1833 in the immense tract embracing the present counties of Cook, Will, and Du Page.

Another factor which contributed to the growth of Congregationalism in the northern region was the slavery issue. Numerous churches took an uncompromising stand on this question even before the Presbyterian schism. The Hampshire Colony Church under the radical leadership of Owen Lovejoy, the Lee Center church where John Cross took an uncompromising position, and the Lyndon church under Nathaniel Smith, exemplified the fervency of abolitionist convictions. The organization of the New England Antislavery Society and the American Antislavery Society; the opening of Oberlin

College where Negroes and women were admitted to the student ranks; the students' rebellion at Lane Seminary and the subsequent formation of a theological department at Oberlin, were highly instrumental in producing a radical realignment of feeling in the nation with respect to slavery. When the influence of William Lloyd Garrison and other agitators of popular emotion was added, a set of influences, national in scope, was set in motion which soon translated itself to Illinois.³⁵ The fact that the influx of population from New England was generally more sympathetic to abolitionism gave to the churches in the northern portion of the state an advantage over those which were geographically and socially situated at the crossing of the ways between the North and the South.³⁶

Thus between 1834 and 1844 Congregationalism was strongly implanted in the northern area. It is true that many of the churches were feeble, but the spirit of Congregationalism was irrepressible and, on the whole, its resurgence was great. Church fatalities ran high, but not unduly so; and it is a remarkable fact that of all the surviving Congregational churches which were founded between 1831 and 1844, a three-to-one majority are found above Peru. (See Table 3, ¹⁰⁶.)

But the expansion of Congregationalism cannot be fully assessed by referring to the western-central and northern sections alone; for Congregational churches were being formed in the region around Alton, at Collinsville, and at Marshall (at the extremes of the National Road), at Albion, and at points up to forty miles southeast of Peoria.³⁷ Nor did all of these churches germinate from New England nuclei; gatherings were made from miscellaneous elements. (See Map 1.)

The men who were founding the churches, forming the associations, establishing the colleges, and promoting the life of the denomination in so many parts of the state neither said

nor intimated that Congregationalism required or possessed "a capital."³⁸ Their correspondence is singularly free from expressions calculated to stir the sectional spirit, and displays no desire to exalt achievements in one region above those in another.

The consuming interest taken in education by the Yale Band in founding Illinois College led on, through Theron Baldwin's influence, to the founding of another school at Monticello where Captain Benjamin Godfrey, "one of the wealthiest and most respected citizens of Alton," was prompted to establish a female academy. As the result of numerous conferences, a site was chosen near Alton and Godfrey supplied upwards of \$10,000 as the nucleus. Erection of the beautiful stone building of Monticello Female Seminary was under way in 1836, and with Baldwin as Principal school opened on April 11, 1838, though public opinion "still scoffed at higher education for women."

Since others have beautifully told the story of this institution,³⁹ it needs no repeating here. Suffice it to say that the Seminary, which was jointly supported by Presbyterians and Congregationalists, was never "narrowly denominational"; Baldwin warned "again and again against the dangers of sectarian control." Earning for itself a "reputation for piety, sound learning, and domestic work," the school lived up to its founders' desire "to educate future mothers of the new state."⁴⁰ When delivering the anniversary address in 1855, Baldwin remarked that the newness of the country presented a clear field for the introduction of "a useful, substantial, and Christian system of female education" as a substitute for those institutions which were "merely or mainly devoted to the ornamental and the frivolous." Viewing its seventeen-year contribution as highly salutary, he observed that large numbers of graduates, already at the head of families, brought, as a class, "the combined power of cultivated intellect, refined man-

ners, correct taste, and deep sympathy with whatever is pure and gentle and elevating, to bear upon the highest interests of the race."⁴¹

In the autumn of 1843, Baldwin left the Seminary to become secretary of the Society for the Promotion of Collegiate and Theological Education at the West (serving until his death in 1870), an organization formed to rehabilitate Western college finances damaged in the Panic. Though his office was in New York, he freely corresponded with his old friends in Illinois, who laid before him the problems of these well-loved but struggling schools.⁴² In dire need of funds in the 1840's, both Illinois and Knox received the encouragement of the Society.

One of the colonies which came to Illinois was headed by the Rev. George W. Gale, formerly of Adams, New York, who in 1834 sought to interest a group in emigrating for the purpose of founding a city and erecting a manual labor college. This venture was successful and by December, 1836, forty families had reached Galesburg, had elected a board of trustees and petitioned the legislature for a college charter (granted February 15, 1837).

While the church which this colony founded was New School Presbyterian, Knox College (like Illinois and Monticello) was a union institution in whose advancement New School Presbyterians and Congregationalists collaborated. The story of these denominations in Galesburg, and that of Knox College in particular, has been so well told⁴³ that it would be unprofitable to linger over it here; but it should be said that of all the colonies which emigrated to Illinois, the Galesburg project was by all odds the best organized.

From the first, as might have been expected with George W. Gale heading the colony and Hiram H. Kellogg presiding over College affairs, Knox was identified with the left wing

of the antislavery cause, and perhaps never more so than during the administration of Jonathan Blanchard, which began in 1845 (shortly after Julian M. Sturtevant became president of Illinois College). Both its situation in the state and its boldness in meeting the slavery challenge gave to Knox an unexcelled opportunity for the training of Christian leadership, an opportunity of which its leaders took full advantage.

The resurgence of Congregationalism in this period was due to several factors, first and foremost of which was the increasing dissatisfaction with the Plan of Union.⁴⁴ Old School Presbyterians were determined at all costs to break with the Congregationalists, and as Joshua L. Wilson, Ashbel Green, Robert J. Breckinridge, and other party leaders prosecuted the war against them, the General Assembly was forced to wrestle with involved issues. The celebrated "Western Memorial" and "Act and Testimony" were signs of the times, heralding the rupture of denominational relations.⁴⁵

The rivalry of the Assembly's Board of Missions and the American Home Missionary Society increased to the breaking point in 1837. Probably the most judicious and gentlemanly argument for the Board was penned by Professor Samuel Miller of Princeton Seminary, who said: "Let both prosper! Let both be sustained! There is an appropriate field for both; and the work of the Lord in our land cannot be so well accomplished as by the separate, yet concurring, labours of both in their respective spheres."⁴⁶

Yet the General Assembly was able to stave off the worst until 1837 when the Old School party, being that year in the majority, abrogated the Plan of Union and cut the American Home Missionary Society and the American Education Society out of the bounds of its churches; the crowning achievement of this Old School reformation was the excision of four synods embracing twenty-eight presbyteries, five hundred and

nine ministers, five hundred and ninety-nine churches and sixty thousand communicants, or more than one-fifth of the denomination.⁴⁷ When the commissioners from these synods were refused seats in the Assembly of 1838, the New School element withdrew for the purpose of organizing what it regarded as the constitutional Assembly.⁴⁸ While New School Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and the American Home Missionary Society continued to co-operate in extending the domain of the church until 1852, the New School General Assembly had to meet in 1839, 1840, 1843 and 1846 before it became evident, even to its most conciliatory members, that the Congregational-Presbyterian relationship was doomed. A powerful factor in the undoing of this relation was furnished by Congregationalists from Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana who met in a Convention at Michigan City in 1846 to wash their hands of the Plan of Union.⁴⁹ As things turned out, however, it was not until the Albany Convention of 1852 that the Plan of Union was scuttled by the Congregationalists.⁵⁰

The multiplication of Congregational churches following the unhappy schism in the Presbyterian Church was promoted by those who preferred their accustomed polity, by the efforts of aggressive Congregational pastors, and by the three Congregational associations which had been organized by the year 1838. New School Presbyterians, especially in the northern part of Illinois, solicited and received the co-operation of Congregationalists,⁵¹ and attempts were made three years in succession (1840-1842) to form a Convention on the model of that in Wisconsin;⁵² but when Congregationalists learned that this plan would abolish their associations, they politely but decisively rejected the scheme.⁵³

Moreover, the slavery question was pulling Presbyterians and Congregationalists apart. While practically all of the ministers who came to Illinois for the American Home Missionary Society had the strictest scruples on slavery, the Society

as such had no ties with abolitionism. "Its single and sole business," asserted its secretary in 1837, "is to extend the Gospel to the desolate and to aid feeble congregations in all parts of the United States, without respect to political institutions."⁵⁴ Had the Society taken a different attitude, it would have jeopardized its great opportunity in the South where its work was too far advanced for it lightly to incur suspicion and earn ill-will.⁵⁵ But the relation of the Congregationalists to slavery is to be treated in another chapter and need not, therefore, be here dealt with extensively.

A factor of the utmost significance for the renascence and, as it were, solidification of Congregationalism in Illinois was the associated life of the churches which channeled and stabilized denominational affection and loyalty. The first impulse in this direction came from the church at Naperville which, though still Presbyterian, called an ecclesiastical council at Walker's Grove (Plainfield), on June 10, 1834.⁵⁶ Rev. Jeremiah Porter, the Clerk of this council, has supplied the names of those attending it:

Rev. Jeremiah Porter and Major De Lafayette Wilcox, U. S. A. of the Chicago church; Rev. N. C. Clark, Deacon E. Clark, Mr. Henry Goodrich, Dr. Abbott, and Mr. Dudley, of the Fountaindale church; Rev. William Kirby, Deacon Reuben Beach and John Blackstone, of the Blackstone's Grove church; Rev. . . . Hazzard, Jesse A. Clark, delegates from Ottawa; Deacon James Mather, Plainfield; Rev. R. W. Gridley and Rev. Nahum Gould, then passing to their fields of labor in the state.⁵⁷

Nahum Gould was the Moderator of this council which freely discussed the question, "Is it advisable to change our form of government so as to make them (that is, the churches) uniformly Congregational?"⁵⁸ Porter stated that,

After a protracted and kind discussion, it was Resolved unanimously, That this convention deem it inexpedient to make any decision concerning the mode of church government, and

each church in our bounds be left to make its own choice of form.⁵⁹

Congregationalism in this instance scored a technical victory in that the churches were left free to decide the mode of government, and it was not long before the Naperville church (which became Congregational on August 1) helped to carry to success its purpose to form an association of Congregational churches. The body which eventually was formed was the Congregational Union of Fox River, but the initiative now passed to the church at Big Grove. Nevertheless its invitation was promptly accepted by the Naperville church, which appointed delegates before accepting an invitation to join with churches in the Jacksonville-Quincy region in founding a similar association.⁶⁰

The Fox River Union, which was formed at Big Grove⁶¹ on June 25-26, 1835, was composed of the churches at Big Grove, Long Grove, Du Page, and Walker's Grove. A constitution, confession of faith and covenant were adopted, and notices sent to the Congregational churches at Princeton, Ausable, Jacksonville, and Michigan City, Indiana, requesting their presence at Plainfield for the Union's next meeting in September. Under the leadership of Nathaniel C. Clark, who became pastor of the Elgin church and eventually joined the Union, at least twenty-seven churches ultimately were formed in the Fox River Valley; in 1842 the Fox River Union counted at least eighteen churches.⁶²

The Congregational Association of Illinois evolved from a Convention of churches in the western-central section which met in the home of Asa Turner, the Quincy pastor, in November, 1834.⁶³ Observing thoroughly Congregational procedure, the Convention submitted a constitution and articles of faith to the churches composing it, namely, Quincy, Mendon, Jacksonville, Atlas, and Griggsville, seven months before the Fox River group had assembled at Big Grove. Since both

associations waited for the approval of the churches desiring to be thus united, priority is assigned to the Congregational Association of Illinois. The Fox River Union received delegates from the Congregational Association of Illinois and sent a delegate—Alfred Greenwood—to the meeting of that body in Jacksonville in October, 1835.⁶⁴ The Congregational Association of Illinois also enjoyed cordial relationships with the Presbytery of Schuyler as several of its pastors adhered to both bodies, but ministers in the Fox River Union were prohibited from adherence to any other group.⁶⁵ In 1841 there were at least twenty-eight ministerial members of the Congregational Association of Illinois, and the number of churches on its roll was approaching thirty.⁶⁶

A third association was formed in the Rock River Valley, which received a large influx of settlers from New England; but the very existence of this fellowship has been overlooked or denied.⁶⁷ Early in 1838 a number of Congregational ministers and churches succeeded in organizing the Rock River Association.⁶⁸ Although at least ten Congregational churches were in operation within its bounds by the end of that year,⁶⁹ only six of these are believed to have taken part in its formation.⁷⁰ The evidence points to the origin of this body in a Convention of churches held at Grand Detour on February 28, 1838, and the new body at once assumed an advisory role, its first delicate task being tactfully performed. Later meetings were held at Princeton⁷¹ and at Buffalo Grove,⁷² and the Dover church was received into fellowship.⁷³ Its agenda for one year having been completed, the Association was becoming a vital factor in the promotion of Congregationalism.⁷⁴

Quickly sensing the significance of a third association for denominational development, the Congregational Association of Illinois sent delegates to the Rock River meeting at Buffalo Grove; one of these, the Rev. William Carter, duly reported to his Association.⁷⁵

The settlement of the northern and northwestern counties of Illinois proceeded in earnest,⁷⁶ and the Congregational churches which multiplied there were in due course received into the Rock River Association, which eventually comprised the following churches:

Princeton (Hampshire Colony)	Lyndon	La Moille
Princeton (Independent)	Byron	Rockford (First)
Providence	Dover	Buffalo Grove
Lee Center	Roscoe	Grand Detour
	Gap Grove	North Grove

There may have been others, but conclusive evidence of their membership is lacking.

The following ministers partook of fellowship in the Rock River Association:

Charles Adams	Lucius Foote	Owen Lovejoy
W. E. Boardman	Joseph Gardner	John Morrill
Ebenezer Brown	Ammon Gaston	William L. Parsons
Aaron B. Church	George Gemmel	Reuel M. Pearson
John Cross	J. A. Hallock	Lansing Porter
Asa Donaldson	Elisha H. Hazard	Nathaniel Smith
Hiram Foote	James Hodges	
Horatio Foote	S. L. Lamberson	

There is no conclusive evidence of the membership of others.

Organized to promote the fellowship of the churches, the Rock River Association exchanged fraternal delegates with the Congregational Association of Illinois,⁷⁷ the General Association of Iowa,⁷⁸ the General Association of Illinois,⁷⁹ the Presbytery of Ottawa,⁸⁰ the Presbytery of Galena,⁸¹ the New School Synod of Illinois,⁸² and the Presbyterian and Congregational Convention of Wisconsin.⁸³ For some reason there seems to have been no exchange with the Fox River Union. Probably doctrinal differences impeded fellowship.

As the strategy of planting higher education developed, ministers and laymen representing the Rock River Association

joined with delegates from other associations and presbyteries in organizing the four conventions at Beloit in 1844-1845 which preceded the founding of Beloit College. The Rev. Reuel M. Pearson of Grand Detour was an original trustee of that institution, and the Rev. Ebenezer Brown of Roscoe attended two of these preliminary conventions.⁸⁴

The Association held its regular meetings, but its existence was a checkered one and a turning-point in its fortunes in 1844-1845 all but destroyed it. Although the Association endured until 1848, its doom was sealed in those years. Why was this?

For one thing, the political activities of its abolitionist ministers disturbed ecclesiastical peace. The Rev. Owen Lovejoy, pastor of the Hampshire Colony Church of Princeton, was indicted and tried for harboring, secreting, and comforting two Negro women, Nancy and Agnes,⁸⁵ though he was not found guilty of these acts.⁸⁶ The Rev. John Cross, a pastor in Knox County, who was charged with "harboring and secreting a colored servant, Susan, and for hindering Andrew Borders from retaking her,"⁸⁷ was thrown in jail "for doing what everybody who lived in a free state knew it was right to do."⁸⁸ Following his release on a *nolle prosequi*, Cross joined the Rock River Association as the pastor of the Congregational churches in La Moille and Lee Center. The churches in the region were passing antislavery resolutions and barring slavery sympathizers from membership,⁸⁹ but the political exploits of men like Lovejoy and Cross, who stumped for the Liberty Party and ran on its ticket themselves, lacked the sanction of the clergy generally and were a source of embarrassment to the American Home Missionary Society.⁹⁰

Another issue which forced a crisis in the Rock River Association was Oberlinism. The revival measures of Professor Charles G. Finney and the Perfectionist theology of

President Asa Mahan and other Oberlin professors had already caused contention in Presbyterian and Congregational ranks in Ohio, and lay beneath the struggle which transferred itself to Illinois and other parts of the Old Northwest as soon as Oberlin graduates entered upon their labors.⁹¹ Well-educated, intensely religious, earnestly devoted to their work, and bringing their Eastern-bred wives to share the privations of frontier life, the Oberlin men found the odds heaped high against them in Illinois. The defensive attitude of their Calvinist brethren, who regarded Perfectionism with its teaching of the attainability of holiness in this life as extremely dangerous to Christian morals, was an insuperable obstacle. The net effect of the ministry of Oberlin men, from the viewpoint of those who had pre-empted the field for the spread of New England piety, was anything but wholesome.⁹²

Around three of these Oberlin pastors in particular did the controversy rage, namely, Charles Adams of Providence, William L. Parsons of Aurora, and Nathaniel Smith of Lyndon. In 1842 the New School Presbytery of Ottawa and the Fox River Congregational Union acted in concert to prevent the further encroachment of Perfectionism and other errors by raising barriers against the Oberlin graduates.⁹³ Adams lost his church,⁹⁴ Smith was intimidated,⁹⁵ and Parsons heard the crashing of the storm around his head;⁹⁶ Ebenezer Brown of Roscoe earned the censure of the American Home Missionary Society for sympathizing with an Oberlin man in his misfortune.⁹⁷

The American Home Missionary Society endeavored to use the General Congregational Association of Illinois to stamp out Oberlinism,⁹⁸ but failed to reckon with the Congregational spirit. In 1845 the Association replied to this effrontery by stating that it exercised no coercive power over local associations, that each was free to act as it thought best with reference to the Oberlin question.⁹⁹ It was the consensus

in the following year that Oberlin men were to be treated as Christian brethren; however, since they were sufficiently numerous for an association of their own, they were advised to form one.

Threatened with destruction, the Association nevertheless pulled through, but its spirit was demoralized; never regaining its composure, it declined to the point of extinction in 1848. Many factors contributed to the decline of the Association,¹⁰⁰ many pastors being irresistibly drawn to the alternative of organizing a new association. Pearson, Gemmel, Donaldson, and others were preoccupied with the purpose of smothering the Rock River Association by withdrawing and forming one which would "leave out the disturbing elements."¹⁰¹

It is appropriate to emphasize that the pastors in Rock River Association, caring for growing congregations and forming new ones, consistently attended the General Association; indeed, four of the eight ministers who called the Princeton Convention were Rock River men, and six laymen and six ministers representing the Rock River Association attended this Congregational Convention in November, 1843. It is, therefore, impossible to account for the failure of the officers of the General Association to take account of the strength and standing of the Rock River Association, and to credit to the extraordinary industry of its churches the organization of the General Association itself! It is inconceivable that the General Association could have been formed without the aggressive labors in behalf of Congregationalism which were put forth by the Rock River pastors and laymen. It may be that since that Association was agitated by theological issues with which they themselves were entirely out of sympathy, General Association officers felt in duty bound to omit all reference to the considerable contribution made to Illinois Congregationalism by the churches of this body. The fact remains, however, that the Rock River pastors and laymen labored

to widen the fraternal relationships which independency all too often fails to promote, and that they quietly advanced the cause of interdenominational accord with their neighbors, the Presbyterians. Not a few of their number humbly accepted censure when it was meted out by their brethren, several suffered undeserved oblivion for their theological and political courage, and many supplied the integrity of their character and the soundness of their judgment to the movement for higher education in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa, whose finest fruits are the colleges at Beloit, Rockford, and Grinnell.

Due notice must also be taken of the fact that Congregationalism was marching into the Wisconsin Territory, four churches (Waukesha, Kenosha, Milton, Beloit) being founded there in 1838.¹⁰² In 1838 the Territory of Iowa also became a field where untiring Congregational workmen invested their energy and zeal in behalf of the denomination. Numerous churches were founded by Asa Turner, Julius A. Reed, and Reuben Gaylord, who succeeded in organizing the General Association of Iowa in 1840. In 1843 seven members of the Iowa Band from Andover Seminary—the counterpart of the Yale Band for Illinois—arrived and were ordained at Denmark.¹⁰³ Thus the advance of Congregationalism beyond the borders of Illinois also stimulated its development within the state.

The more that efforts were made to comprehend all Congregationalists and Presbyterians in a union for northern Illinois, the more was denominational consciousness reanimated. Though Congregationalism was now solidly implanted in three main sectors, its lack of organic state-wide connections exposed it to the suspicion of New Englanders and to local Presbyterian encroachment. But the logical outcome of such felt need—the organization of the General Association of Illinois—will be treated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION AND AFTER (1844-1865)

Beginning with the organization of the Congregational Church in Mendon, in February 1833, the growth of the Congregational churches in Illinois henceforth was fairly rapid. By 1844, there were between eighty and eighty-five Congregational churches in the state¹ (additional four which joined later were then Presbyterian) organized into three local associations—the Illinois (later renamed Quincy) Association, the Fox River Union, and the Rock River Association. It was then thought opportune to take steps toward the organization of a general association which would provide a bond of union for the local associations. It is interesting to note that originally the promoters of the project intended to organize a general Conference which would comprise two states—Illinois and Iowa. The notice dated September 21, 1843, published in the *Western Citizen*² was addressed to “the Congregational Churches scattered throughout Illinois and Iowa,” and invited “all the churches above addressed to meet in Convention at Princeton . . . for the purpose of organizing a General Conference of the Congregational Churches of Illinois and Iowa.” It was signed by the Reverend William Carter and seven other ministers, all from Illinois. A note of self-defense against Presbyterian attacks is clearly sounded: among the reasons for the project is “that we may by combining our strength, be able to defeat all incidious attacks and open assaults against our Church Polity . . . and that we may take some measures to be represented as a body to our Brethren in the

East . . . and afford them evidence that we have not departed from the 'Faith once delivered to the Saints.' "

When the Convention actually met at Princeton, on November 15, 1843,³ probably in the church served by the Reverend Owen Lovejoy, there were present ten ministers and fourteen lay delegates from the Illinois and the Rock River Associations. Only two of the signers of the call for the Convention were among the ministerial members present at the November meeting. The Reverend William Kirby of the Mendon church was chosen chairman, and the Reverend Charles Adams of Providence was elected secretary. The Convention then proceeded to consider a Constitution which was reported by the Business Committee and which seems to have been prepared beforehand, for it was reported on the afternoon of the opening day of the Convention. The appeal to the brethren in Iowa must have resulted in a failure, for nothing is said about the organization of an Association comprising the two states, and the name proposed was "the General Association of Illinois." After adopting the Constitution, the Confession of Faith was reported for discussion and was adopted.

After the conclusion of the important business for which the Convention had been called, a resolution was passed, respectfully recommending to the associations in the state that they consider the Constitution and Articles of Faith, and if they approve them, appoint delegates to meet at Farmington "on the third Friday of June next," for the purpose of consummating the proposed General Association.

Although we possess no documentary evidence as to what actions the three existing associations took in the matter,⁴ yet from the result it seems clear that they acted favorably. Formerly, it used to be asserted that the Rock River Association did not participate; but three ministerial members of this body were present at Farmington, so that this Association was

well represented. On the date appointed, June 21, 1844, the proposed Convention which organized the General Congregational Association was held at the Congregational Church of Farmington, Fulton County, of which the Reverend Milo N. Miles was then pastor.

For some reason not recorded in the official minutes, but surmised to be the great flood which had made roads difficult, if not impassable, the letters missive calling the meeting were disappointingly responded to. There were only nine ministers present, namely: Daniel Chapman, John Cross, William Carter, Milo N. Miles, C. B. Barton, Charles Adams, S. G. Wright, J. T. Holmes, and R. M. Pearson. Of these, but three of the brethren had been members either of the group which had signed the call for the Princeton Convention or had attended that meeting. Besides, there were five corresponding members, Lucius H. Parker, George Pyle, and three Methodist ministers; moreover, the churches were further represented by five lay delegates. The Convention was called to order by the Reverend William Carter who, as the first signer of the call to the Princeton Convention, may perhaps be regarded as the leader of the project now happily consummated. Thereupon, it proceeded to organize itself by electing the Reverend Daniel Chapman as chairman, and the Reverend J. T. Holmes as secretary. The session was then opened with prayer by the Reverend John Cross.

The chief item of business before this Convention was the consideration of the Constitution and the Confession of Faith, which had been recommended at the preliminary meeting held at Princeton. The Constitution was very simple. The object of the General Association was defined as the promotion of "intercourse and harmony among the churches comprising this body and to effect a more extensive co-operation in every good work." "The local Associations shall retain their individual rights and privileges and no Ecclesiastical power

or authority shall ever be assumed by the General Association or be delegated to it.”⁵

The Confession of Faith adopted by this body may be described as evangelical in emphasis and Calvinistic in theology. There is nothing in it which would differentiate it from any New School Presbyterian creed. The only unusual feature appears in article 11, where the Christian Sabbath is linked with the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper as being “of perpetual obligation in the church.”⁶

All ministerial applicants for membership in the General Association were required to adopt the Constitution and the Confession of Faith as a prerequisite of admission; lay delegates were required only to “assent” to these statements. Accordingly, the formal act of organization of the General Association consisted in the signing of the two documents by the majority of the ministerial members of the Convention. For some unexplained reason, the Reverend C. B. Barton’s name is not among the signatures, but his place is taken by the Reverend Lucius H. Parker.

Before the Convention actually adjourned, the Business Committee presented a lengthy report on the subject of slavery. Similar reports, sometimes couched in surprisingly vigorous—if not violent—language, were to become almost invariably part of the resolutions passed by the subsequent meetings until the outbreak of the Civil War. They left no one in the slightest doubt as to the fact that Congregationalists of Illinois were among the staunchest anti-slavery elements. The resolution adopted on this occasion in part asserted:

4th. That the Association about to be organized ought to receive no minister to its fellowship who does not rank slaveholding with other heinous sins. . .

5th. That the laws of this State, which subject a person to a criminal prosecution & incarceration with felons in a common jail for extending to a needy fellow creature that relief which

a savage would not deny, which God's word makes indispensable to discipleship, are a wicked interference with the rights of conscience—a gross violation of the Constitution of our country—infamous to the reputation of the people of Illinois, and especially discreditable to all professing Christians who slumber over the iniquity.⁷

Strong words, these!

At the next meeting of the General Association, held at Princeton, three members of the body were present at the opening of the meeting, but one other member arrived later. Five new members were received. The question of slavery was again discussed, and the first article of the By-laws, which were adopted, read as follows:

No one shall be admitted to membership who does not regard Southern slaveholding as a sin clearly condemned in the Bible.⁸

One ministerial brother, the Reverend John Cross, gave notice that he would protest the passage of this measure. But at the next meeting of the Association, held at Farmington, the committee on the amendments of the By-laws and the Constitution did not report any changes in regard to the first article. In fact, that statement was reaffirmed by implication, for the committee reported "that the standing rule rejecting slaveholders from membership is sufficient & therefore no change in the constitution is called for on this subject."⁹

Although the whole body of Illinois Congregationalism was staunchly anti-slavery, and thus in hearty sympathy with a similar stand on this subject for which the recently founded Oberlin College was famed, the Association nevertheless opposed the theological innovation known as "Oberlin Perfectionism." The request for advice regarding this matter came from the local associations which were perplexed as to what is to be done with applicants for membership who held "those peculiar views of doctrine & religious effort taught at

Oberlin." In brief, Oberlin Perfectionism, as defined by its chief exponent, President Asa Mahan in his *Scripture Doctrine of Christian Perfection* consisted of

the perfect assimilation of our entire character to that of Christ, having at all times and under all circumstances, the 'same mind that was also in Christ Jesus.'¹⁰

At the session of 1845 the matter was thoroughly discussed. The Reverend Mr. Holmes then formulated a challenge in which he demanded a definite answer on the part of the Association "whether or not they will unite ecclesiastically with the brethren of the Oberlin school." In his preamble he stated that "the Eastern Congregational bodies now refuse to hold correspondence with Associations composed of Oberlin Perfectionists or those who endorse their opinions," and furthermore that "the Home Missy Socy—the organ of those chs, now refuses to support those who belong to that class."

Thus the recently formed General Association was pitched headlong into an acute theological struggle, the stakes of which were of great importance to them: their work in the state was in its infancy, and self-supporting churches were exceedingly rare. Without the support of the A. H. M. S. it was impossible to carry on. But this Society refused to support those who held the Oberlin doctrine of perfectionism. Accordingly, this was a question of principle, of conscience, or of religious conviction. Had there been any large number of adherents of "Oberlinism" in Illinois, the promising work of the Congregational missionaries might well face a crisis of major proportions.

But it is clearly evident that the majority of members of the Association obviously were not in sympathy with these views. Only the Rock River Association was willing to accept those who held them, and comprised in its membership a number of such brethren. Indeed, as has been shown in

the previous chapter, it was partly for that reason that it later disintegrated. The resolution proposed by the majority in the General Association in reply to Mr. Holmes' challenge was unequivocal:

That in the judgment of this body the interest of religion, and the prosperity of the Congregational Chs. in Illinois particularly, require that we should hereafter decline receiving to membership ministers who belong to that class usually denominated *Oberlin Perfectionists*.¹¹

Nevertheless, the fact that this resolution, although proposed, was voted to be laid on the table till the next meeting, indicates that there was some opposition to its passage. The action taken in 1846 (at the meeting held at Farmington) was much more restrained and judicious, being to the effect that the local associations be advised

To receive them [the Oberlin Perfectionists] as they do other professed servants to Christ, and extend or withhold their confidence according as they appear to be actuated by the spirit of Christ, or the spirit of sect.

2nd, that they exchange pulpits with them, commune with them, and cooperate with them as with others, when circumstances make such exchange and cooperation desirable.

But *whereas* experience has shown that many of the above brethren have peculiarities of faith and order to which they attach great importance. .

& *whereas* the discussion of these in our local associations is not likely to promote the cause of Christ,

and *whereas* the brethren referred to above are sufficiently numerous to form an ecclesiastical body of their own, without travelling farther than many of our own members.

Therefore, *Resolved*, that in the judgment of this Association it is desirable that the above brethren keep their ecclesiastical business distinct from ours, and that if any of them apply for membership in any of our local associations, it is our opinion that such association should advise them accordingly.¹²

This is a Solomonic verdict indeed!

When this resolution was presented at the meeting of the Illinois Association (the district body), it was sustained by a vote of seven to five. The group went on record that "in the judgment of this body the interests of religion generally and the prosperity of the Congregational churches in particular require that we should hereafter decline receiving to membership ministering brethren who belong to the class usually denominated Oberlin Perfectionists."¹³ Even so the dissenting minority was quite considerable.

Another example of the theological suspicion with which Mid-Western Congregationalists were regarded occurred in 1844. It will be remembered that eleven years earlier, a similar event took place, when formal charges of heresy had been preferred in the Presbytery against President Edward Beecher and Professors William Kirby and Julian M. Sturtevant, all of Illinois College.¹⁴ But the accused had been promptly acquitted by a large majority vote. Nevertheless, suspicion as to the orthodoxy of the college faculty did not altogether die out. At the meeting of the New School Presbyterian Synod held at Jerseyville on October 18, 1844, some members of the body gave voice to "their fears that an influence was exerted on the minds of the youth educated at that College unfavorable to orthodox views of Gospel truth and ecclesiastical order."¹⁵ Thereupon, a committee of inquiry was appointed to investigate "the alleged causes of complaint and the reports which are in circulation to the discredit of Illinois College and to report at our next annual meeting." Three of the accused faculty members, Professors Samuel Adams, Truman M. Post, and Jonathan B. Turner, were members of the Illinois Congregational Association—one as its licentiate, and two as ordained ministers. Accordingly, feeling that the accusation against its members reflected on the orthodoxy of the whole body, a committee was appointed at the meeting of 1845 which, after consideration, brought in the following report:

1. Within five years each of these brethren on application for license has undergone a protracted and thorough examination by this Association in respect to their views of Bible truth and church order and their qualifications to preach the Gospel of Christ. In each case the examination was unanimously sustained and license granted by the Association. Two of them have also been ordained by this body. . . . Each of these brethren at the time of his license gave assent to the articles of faith adopted by this body and at our last meeting to the Confession of faith of the General Association of Illinois.

In the meantime, the committee appointed by the Synod of Illinois came to Jacksonville to undertake the investigation. It lodged a complaint, consisting of four formal charges, namely: a distrust of the theological soundness of some professors; objections to the views presumably held by some professors as to polity and creeds; latitudinarianism regarding moral and religious truths; and the imparting of instruction in the province of theological seminaries.¹⁶

The synodical committee, although at first refusing to confer with the faculty members, in the end consented to participate in a meeting of the Board of Trustees to which the faculty was invited. After a thorough grilling of the accused, the Board of Trustees issued the following statement:

1. That as a board we are perfectly satisfied with the orthodoxy of the Professors of this College and with the wisdom of their instructions.

2. That in the opinion of this board the Faculty have not taught the students to regard no philosophical or religious truth as yet settled.

3. That in the opinion of this Board the Faculty have not *invaded* the province of the Theological Seminary in lecturing and speaking within College walls against creeds, Confessions of Faith and Church organization.

4. That the Faculty of the College be requested to com-

municate fully and freely in writing their views as to church Government, Ecclesiastical Order, Terms of Communion, Creeds & Confessions of Faith.

Attest: Nathaniel Coffin, Secretary.¹⁷

Thereupon, the committee of the Illinois Association submitted a resolution declaring full confidence in the soundness of the views of the three accused brethren; and regretting exceedingly that the Synod of Illinois should have felt it necessary to take the action it had taken; and confidently expecting that the Synod would exonerate the brethren from all allegations. The Presbyterian synodical committee, however, never made a formal report, and the Synod finally disposed of the case, declaring, according to Professor Sturtevant (who had in the meantime been elected President of the College), that they "preferred no charges and they do not endorse any of the rumors unfavorably affecting the College."¹⁸ In this way the matter rested.

The period following the organization of the General Association was one of rapid growth. Three years after its inception, at the annual meeting held on May 20, 1847, the report on the state of religion read in part as follows:

The General Association of Illinois, now in the 4th year of its existence, has experienced the continual blessing of God, and has thus far enjoyed a steady and healthful growth. Less than one half of the Congregational churches of the state are as yet connected with us, yet the number is continually increasing. All the order and stability of the church in the older states are not yet attained, and yet it is believed that we are approximating towards it. Our churches are mostly feeble, and yet they are all increasing in strength.¹⁹

In October, 1844, the fourth local Association, the Central, was organized at Farmington; its territory extended horizontally clear across the state from the Wabash to the Mississippi. Indeed, it was so large that from its original territory three other associations were later organized—the Bureau,

the Central West, and the Central East. Within ten years it was the second largest as to the number of churches—twenty-four—as well as far as membership was concerned, 1604. By 1856 it grew to be the largest association, with thirty-seven churches, seventeen of which were self-sustaining, twenty receiving missionary aid, and seven being without ministers. Membership reached over nineteen hundred. It comprised within its boundaries the largest Congregational church in Illinois, the First Church of Galesburg, boasting 409 members.²⁰

The Rockford Association, originally known as the Winnebago and Ogle Association, was organized on February 15, 1848. Its territory was carved out of the northern portion of the very extensive Rock River Association. This latter body had been declining for several years past, since it comprised some "Oberlin Perfectionists" among its membership, and the A. H. M. S. refused to aid them financially. Consequently, the churches served by them suffered thereby. Moreover, the matter became the subject of internal dissension. For these and other reasons, it was at last decided in three meetings held during 1847 that a new association be formed. The committee appointed at Rockford in November for the purpose of drafting a new constitution proceeded on the principle of leaving out of the new body "the disturbing elements."²¹ Thereupon, the Winnebago and Ogle Association was formed the next February. The strongest church in the new group was the First Church of Rockford.

Three years later, two other associations were added to the previous five, namely the Geneseo Association, organized from what was formerly the southern portion of the Rock River Association, with Lyndon as the largest congregation; and the Morgan Conference, with Jacksonville as the strongest church. Because President Sturtevant and other members of the faculty of the Illinois College held membership in this

Association, it exercised a considerable degree of leadership beyond its own confines. As for the Geneseo Association, it was organized on April 26, 1851, when it appeared to the brethren assembled for the purpose at Geneseo "that in view of the increase of Congregational churches in this region, it is expedient to form an Association."²² It is interesting to note that in this instance "the Articles of Faith of the General Congregational Association of Iowa were . . . adopted," and that at first the body continued to use the name of the Rock River Association; it was not until the next year that it was renamed Geneseo. But for some reason, not apparent in the minutes, by 1860 the organization was in a moribund condition, and held no meetings until May 7, 1867, when it was reorganized at Sheffield. These two associations reported, in 1852, a constituency of ten and four churches respectively.

On August 3, 1852, the Fox River Union, the second oldest local association in the state, divided, thus giving rise to the Elgin Association, with St. Charles and Elgin as the strongest churches. At the time of division, the parent association had forty-five churches with a membership of 2165. The daughter association was set up with sixteen churches. Thus within ten years of the organization of the General Association the number of churches almost doubled.

This rapid growth of our churches in Illinois is illustrated by the sudden and surprisingly vigorous rise of Congregationalism in Chicago, which then soon became the focal point of the denomination in the state: for it became the place of publication of the denominational weekly and the seat of the Chicago Theological Seminary. At first sight it appears to be quite a mystery why no Congregational church had been organized hitherto in this thriving and fast growing metropolis, which even then was known as "the city of churches."²³ As has already been mentioned in the previous chapter in connection with the organization of the First Presbyterian Church, Con-

gregationalists were to be found among the earliest settlers. In fact, they were quite numerous, as is witnessed by the organization of the Congregational Church in Naperville in 1834, one of the earliest in the state. There were four Congregational churches in the close vicinity of Chicago—DuPage (Naperville), Big Grove, Long Grove (Bristol), and Walker's Grove (Plainfield), which organized themselves into the Congregational Union of Fox River as early as June 26, 1835.²⁴ Why, then, was there no Congregational church in Chicago, a city of some 50,000 inhabitants? One good Connecticut Congregationalist who moved to Chicago in 1843 describes the situation as follows:

The Presbyterian Church is the dominant one, and the tendency in the church is to treat the Congregationalists as intruders or dissenting ultraists. The first people are members of the Presbyterian churches, and there is not the best feeling between the two denominations.²⁵

Apparently, the Plan of Union had a strong hold upon the Congregational groups within the Presbyterian churches of the city. That there was some Congregational denominational consciousness left may be inferred from the fact that the religious weekly, *The Prairie Herald*, was established in Chicago by J. B. Walker, "a professional abolitionist," to serve the Congregationalists and the New School Presbyterians in Northern Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

The organization of the First Congregational Church of Chicago is connected with the name of the man who exerted such an overpowering influence upon the organization of the First Presbyterian Church almost twenty years before, that although he was the only Presbyterian among the founding fathers of that organization, it became Presbyterian rather than Congregational. This was Philo Carpenter, at the time of which we are speaking a member of the Third Presbyterian Church on the West Side of Chicago. The cause of the dis-

sension was slavery. The majority of the church members were staunchly anti-slavery and viewed with concern, if not alarm, the equivocal stand which the New School Presbyterian Assembly chose to uphold. Moreover, the pastor of the church, the Reverend L. H. Loss, although himself an anti-slavery man, expressed from the pulpit views on the subject which proved unpalatable to the majority of the congregation. Thereupon, several meetings were held by the dissatisfied majority in which the matter was discussed. This group comprising forty-two members in the end adopted, in imitation of a similar action taken by the Presbytery of Rochester, N. Y., a resolution condemning the action of the Detroit General Assembly. By this bold step, the church among other things,

3. *Resolved*, That this church are [sic] dissatisfied with the present position of our General Assembly on the subject of disciplining those guilty of holding their fellow men in bondage; that their last acts at Detroit have been construed to represent black or white, as suited the different sections of the church.

4. *Resolved*, That this Church, so long as this vasculating [sic] policy is pursued, hereby declare their determination to stand aloof from all meetings of Presbytery, Synod and Assembly, and thus, as they believe, free and relieve themselves of all responsibility.²⁶

A brave stand indeed, but alas! utterly indefensible from the point of view of Presbyterian principles of polity. Technically, this was an irregular action. No local Presbyterian church may repudiate an action of an ecclesiastical judiciary—least of all the General Assembly—and do so without perpetrating an ecclesiastical rebellion. One can hardly understand this action except on the theory that the membership of the Third Church (as well as some other Chicago Presbyterian churches) derived so largely from Congregational antecedents that it now unconsciously reverted atavistically to the ancestral type and by the characteristically Congregational assertion of the supremacy of the local congregation to all and sundry outside

authorities bore mute testimony to "the pit from which they had been dug!" No wonder, therefore, that the Presbytery of Chicago pronounced the action disorderly, and requested its rescinding. When the recalcitrant group refused to comply, the Presbytery, on April 2, 1851, took the following equally un-Presbyterian and irregular action:

1. That those members of this church who voted for said resolutions, did thereby, and by subsequently neglecting to rescind said Resolutions, disqualify themselves to act as members of the Presbyterian Church, and can no longer be recognized as such, while retaining their present position.
2. That the Session, consisting of the Pastor and those Elders who did not vote for the resolution referred to, immediately inform those who have thus separated themselves from the church, that if any of them still wish to walk in fellowship with this Church, under the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, that wish shall be granted.
3. That all who do not express such wish within two weeks, be regarded as adhering to their previous action, and the Session be directed to strike their names from the roll of the church.²⁷

This action smacked strongly of an excommunication "with bell and candle." The Presbytery exceeded its powers, for no one was cited by name, no one given a trial at which he could state his case and be adjudged guilty or innocent "with the due process of law." The session was categorically requested to expel the majority of the members of the church. The pastor of the church, the Reverend L. H. Loss, must have complied with a heavy heart, for he had been known, before and after this sad event, to have continued co-operating with the Congregationalists.²⁸ But he probably regarded the action of the majority of his church members as indefensible from the point of view of the Presbyterian polity, and submitted to the decision of the Presbytery. Nevertheless, he himself left the pastorate of the Third Church shortly afterwards, for

in July he already served as pastor of the Congregational Church of Joliet.²⁹

When the moderator of the session of the Third Presbyterian Church announced the verdict, Philo Carpenter arose and quietly announced that "regular religious services would be held on the following Sabbath in the lecture room of the church at the usual hour!"³⁰ The lecture room had been built at his own expense and was even then his private property. Thus for a time both groups met in the same building, separated only by a thin wooden partition. But steps were immediately taken to organize a new congregation, the First Congregational Church of Chicago.

The Council which convened for the purpose on May 22 in the Canal Street Methodist Church comprised seven of the fourteen churches invited by the letters missive. The members of the Council came from as far as Waukegan and Aurora. Forty-eight persons comprised the founding members. In a letter written by Philo Carpenter to the secretaries of the A. H. M. S. on May 30, 1851, he says:

I will also add that we have a house nearly ready to be occupied in the immediate vicinity of the Third Presbyterian Church, where we hope to be able to support a good minister without aid from abroad.

Despite many discouragements, the church grew steadily. The little frame house of worship in which the congregation met was destroyed by fire in June, 1853, before it had been a year in existence. A new edifice, much larger and commodious, was immediately planned, and within three months after the fire some eight or ten thousand dollars were pledged. The dedication of the new church took place on October 28, 1855. It was the most costly in the city. "The completion of this house constitutes an era of Congregationalism in this city." By the end of 1858, the membership of the church numbered 400. It had received during the year 152 new members.³¹

But once "the ice was broken," other Congregational churches were formed in the city in quick succession. The Plymouth Church was organized on December 1, 1852, with forty-seven founding members. Most of them came from the First Presbyterian Church and the reason for their separation was the same as in the case of the First Church—anti-slavery feeling. Within five months, the congregation "built a spacious and beautiful church edifice unencumbered by debt; contributed two hundred dollars toward the fifty thousand dollar fund for the erection of Congregational edifices at the West; called and settled a pastor; aided materially in the establishment of the 'Congregational Herald' and in various other ways . . ."³² The first edifice was built on the corner of Madison and Dearborn Streets, but moved successively southward, until their fourth church building was located on Michigan Avenue below Twentieth Street.

The third Congregational church to be organized in the city was the New England Church—on June 15, 1853. The Reverend John C. Holbrook, an energetic New Englander, came from a successful pastorate in Dubuque, Iowa, to undertake the promising work in Chicago, realizing the strategic importance of the place. At first the congregation met in the North Market Hall, but its own meeting house was dedicated on October 24, 1853.

The fourth church to be organized was the South Congregational Church at Twenty-Sixth and Calumet Avenue (November, 1853), which after the fire in 1871 consolidated with the Plymouth Church; and the fifth, the Edwards Church, was organized in the summer of 1854 as a mission by the Reverend W. A. Nichols, who built the chapel at his own expense. It later was moved to the corner of Halsted and Harrison Streets, but ultimately passed over to the Presbyterians and became the Westminster Presbyterian Church. The revered founder of the First Presbyterian Church, the Reverend Jere-

miah Porter, returned in 1859 from Green Bay, Wisconsin, to take charge of this church. Thus within three years of the introduction of Congregationalism into Chicago five congregations were gathered.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the rapid growth justified the organization, on April 12, 1853, of the Chicago Congregational Association. A preliminary meeting, consisting of "some ten or twelve clergymen and lay members," had met at Warner's Hall on December 1, 1852, and authorized a committee of three, namely, E. Goodman, J. M. Davis, and J. M. Williams, "to draft a Basis for such an association and . . . to call a meeting at their discretion to complete the organization."³³ The constituent meeting, called for April 12, 1853, comprised four ministers and two laymen from Chicago, two ministers from Elgin, two from Waukegan, one minister and one layman from Plum Grove, one minister from Ottawa, and one even from so considerable a distance as Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Reverend William Holmes of Plum Grove was elected moderator, and the Reverend J. M. Williams of Chicago, scribe. This group adopted the Constitution and the Articles of Faith which had been prepared by the committee, and thus formally completed the organization of the Association. The action was reported somewhat over-hopefully in the *Congregational Herald* as follows:

A considerable number of Ministers assembled in this city. . . . (and) formed a new Association under the above title. . . . It is expected that from 15 to 20 Ministers and churches will connect themselves with this body.³⁴

The notice carefully avoids any specific commitment as to when "it is expected that the 15 to 20 Ministers" would join the new body. Since this is at present the largest Congregational Association in the country, the pious hope of the reporter has been abundantly fulfilled. But at the time of the organization, be it noted, only nine ministers and two churches (none

in Chicago proper) became the founding members of the new body.³⁵ But at the second annual meeting, the Association already consisted of fourteen ministerial members and five churches.³⁶

It may be remarked that true to the strongly anti-slavery and reformatory spirit of Chicago Congregationalism, among the pronouncements of the Declaration of Principles we read the following:

We believe that slave holding (that is holding our fellow beings as property) is an immorality in practice and the defense of it is heresy in principle, either of which should be regarded as a disqualification for church fellowship.

And furthermore

We believe that the traffic in intoxicating drinks should be regarded as a heinous sin against God, and that those who indulge in such practice ought to be excluded from church membership.

It is interesting to examine the programs of the annual meetings of the Association in those early times: they certainly cannot be said to have been overweighted on the side of business, while speeches and "essays" abound. The meetings ordinarily comprised two sermons, four essays, and a biblical exegesis. The topics of the essays were predominantly theological and dealt with such subjects as a "Dissertation on Original Sin," "What Is the Bible Doctrine in Regard to a Millenium?" and "Is the Immortality of the Wicked Taught in the Bible?" Among the more "practical" topics is to be reckoned a paper on "How Far May We Make the Work of Raising the Salary of a Minister the Work of the Sabbath?"; an "Essay on Secret Societies Relative to Their Influence Against True Religion and Republicanism"; and an "Essay on the Best Method for Making the Meetings of the Ass'n More Interesting and Profitable." Apparently, the founding

fathers faced the same difficulties as their successors in these amusement-mad days!

The examination of candidates for licensure was taken quite seriously: in 1858 four victims were subjected to an ordeal which "continued through the day," as the scribe laconically informs us. But this strenuous duty was soon delegated to the faculty of the Chicago Theological Seminary, which thus was empowered to grant preaching licenses at its discretion.

The rising importance of Chicago for Illinois Congregationalism was manifested in still another way: namely, by the establishment there of a denominational weekly, *Congregational Herald*. This action clearly indicates that Midwest Congregationalism was becoming self-conscious of its independence of the East; for it felt that the Eastern publications did not and could not give sufficient space to the young but vigorous North-West. Accordingly, the Congregationalists in Chicago bought for \$1,000 *The Prairie Herald*, which had for some nine years been published as a joint organ of the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists. The paper was failing, not only because this was a period when both denominations were asserting their own separate selfhood, but also because the policy of the paper, after it had passed from the hands of its anti-slavery founder, J. B. Walker, was mildly pro-slavery, or at least not vigorously anti-slavery.³⁷ There were already five religious weeklies in Chicago at the time, all denominational. *Congregational Herald* became the sixth, making its debut on April 7, 1853. It represented a considerable venture in religious journalism, being of full newspaper size format—an undertaking which even the whole denomination cannot support in our days. Its editors were the Reverend John C. Holbrook and the Reverend James M. Davis. But the latter resigned in August of 1853, having accepted a call to the Congregational Church of Rutland, Vermont. Thus Holbrook remained chiefly

in charge, although he associated with himself a considerable group of collaborators on the editorial board.

It is an indication of the unmistakable rift between the New School Presbyterians and the Congregationalists that the establishment of *Congregational Herald* did not take place without an acrimonious controversy. The Presbyterian paper, *Chicago Evangelist*, asserted that the owner of *The Prairie Herald*, J. A. Wight, had been forced to sell his paper to the Congregationalists at "about half the usual price." The implication was that the Presbyterians were then forced to establish a paper of their own. The editors of the *Herald* defended their paper by asserting that Mr. Wight had advertised his paper as being for sale several weeks before they had begun their negotiations with him, and that they had paid him his own price, namely, \$1,000. At this time, Mr. Wight had made no conditions, but later he wished to impose the proviso that the paper be continued on the same basis as before, namely, as a joint organ of the two denominations. The prospective buyers then told him that they could not accept the condition, for if he had lost money on the paper as then operated, they would also. They informed him that they proposed to publish a denominational, Congregational paper, and that he was free to offer his paper to the Presbyterians, if they wished to buy it. "He did so, and the proposition to them to buy the whole, or part, were all declined, and advice and consent were given to sell to us."³⁸

The new publication bore ample and frequent evidence of the tension developing with ever increasing force between the two denominations. Controversies were frequent. But there is no doubt that *Congregational Herald* tremendously strengthened the growing Congregational denominational consciousness and vigorously supported all efforts to establish the work of the denomination on firm foundations. The editors regarded the heavy responsibility and strenuous labors required

to make the paper a success as a work of love, and for some years served gratuitously. Within three years they reported 3,700 subscribers, and launched a two year campaign for 6,000 more. In fact, the paper prospered sufficiently that the directors took a vote in 1856 that "All the net profits of the *Herald* are to be given in perpetuity to the Chicago Theological Seminary."³⁹

But the most ambitious and important project which made Chicago a radiating center of influence upon Congregationalism of the mid-western states was the establishment of the Chicago Theological Seminary. The need for the training of mid-western theological students in an institution close to the field where they would later engage in ministerial labors had long been felt.⁴⁰ At first, the three colleges—Illinois, Knox, and Beloit—considered the advisability of establishing a chair of theology in connection with their institutions. The last named institution in 1849 considered calling Dr. Albert Barnes of Philadelphia, celebrated for his liberalism, as president and professor of theology, but he declined. In the end the idea of establishing theological chairs in colleges was given up. The New School Presbyterians were likewise planning to establish a western theological institution. A group of nine persons from Galena, Illinois, sent an overture to the General Assembly held in Philadelphia in 1849 proposing their city as the site of the new seminary. This thriving mining town had planned to establish such a school ever since its founding in 1820, and had offered to raise \$30,000 for the purpose.⁴¹ The possibility of establishing a union seminary which would serve both the New School Presbyterians and the Congregationalists was for a time discussed. But a Presbyterian Convention held in Chicago in May, 1850, to deal with this matter, decided against a union institution. At least the school would have to be under Presbyterian auspices, and the professors "should therefore be connected with the Constitutional Presbyterian Church."⁴² Thus the idea of a

union seminary was abandoned. Stephen Peet reported that the Congregationalists were "left out and shut out" of the plans by the Presbyterians.⁴³ The Michigan Congregational leader, the Reverend H. F. Kitchel of Detroit, expressed himself in a similar vein, saying:

If we have a North-western Seminary under Presbyterian auspices, and Andover and Bangor and Yale continue to breed ministers who "speak half in the speech of Ashdod, according to the language of each people," in self-defense we must soon have a theological school of our own beyond the Lakes.⁴⁴

The first actual move which eventuated in the establishment of the Seminary was made by the Reverend L. Smith Hobart, pastor at Ann Arbor, Michigan. He read a paper at the meeting of the General Association of that state in May, 1853, in which he suggested the advisability of establishing a theological department at the University of Michigan for the training of the ministry for the Congregational churches in the state. The novel feature of this plan was that he modeled it upon the practice of the medical department of the University, whereby the instruction was to be divided into one half-year term of lectures and the other half a reading term on the field under the supervision of some minister. A committee was appointed to consider the proposal and to report at the next meeting.

A notice of this action having been reported in the *Congregational Herald*,⁴⁵ it stirred up a considerable interest, and undoubtedly precipitated action which otherwise might not have been taken so soon. The prime mover in this matter was the Reverend Stephen Peet, pastor at Batavia, to which church he had come from a long term of distinguished service in Wisconsin. He had served as the agent of the A. H. M. S. in the latter state, and had been the leading spirit in the organization of the General Convention of Wisconsin and in

the founding of the Beloit College. Peet visited his near neighbor, the Reverend G. S. F. Savage of St. Charles, on March 14, 1854, and discussed with him his conception of what the theological seminary should be. They agreed that Hobart's plan was not satisfactory, insofar as it did not aspire to provide an institution under the control of the Congregational churches themselves but only a department of a university, and did not envisage the needs of the entire mid-western region, but only of the state of Michigan. Peet wished to "unite all the Congregational churches from Ohio to the Rocky Mountains in one Theological Seminary, established in Chicago as the great center of all this region, and with new features, especially adapted to present needs and under the control of the churches."⁴⁶

The two ministers decided to call a meeting at which to present their plan. This conference was held two weeks later, at the office of the *Congregational Herald*. Seven persons were present—six ministers and one layman, Philo Carpenter, who was appointed chairman. Although the proposal met with hearty approval, it seemed so serious and far-reaching an undertaking that it was felt that further consideration was necessary. The second meeting was held in April, and was attended by delegates from Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa. This group again heartily endorsed the project. Moreover, when the plan proposed by the Reverend Mr. Hobart was approved by the General Association of Michigan at its annual meeting in May, it was felt that the time was ripe to call a General Convention at which to adopt a policy which would forestall separate and divisive action.

Accordingly, on June 12 and 13, 1854, a meeting attended by representatives of five mid-western states was held in Chicago. The Reverend Asa Turner was chosen moderator. As the result of the deliberations of this body, it was decided to appoint a comprehensive committee to work up the plans and preliminary

arrangements and to call a General Convention at the proper time. The committee thus appointed elected the Reverend Stephen Peet as chairman. A few weeks later, the committee engaged Mr. Peet as the financial agent at a salary pledged by a few friends. He resigned his Batavia pastorate on July 3, and moved to Chicago to devote himself wholly to the new project. He reported that "The idea of establishing theological seminaries as departments of *Colleges* is given up and our aim is to have *one* good institution for *all the Northwest*."⁴⁷

The General Convention, agreeable to the resolution, met in the Plymouth Church of Chicago on September 26-27. It comprised fifty-four ministers and twenty lay delegates, representing Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, and Wisconsin. The chairman of the business committee, Stephen Peet, then presented his report to the effect "That the time has come when measures ought to be taken for the establishment of a Congregational Theological Seminary for the Northwest."⁴⁸ He furthermore recommended that the institution be located in Chicago. The committee had already begun negotiating for the purchase of Rush Medical College on the north side of Chicago at a cost of \$12,000. It was proposed that there be at least three resident professors and several lecturers. The course of study was to be divided into two terms—a lecture term of about twenty-eight or thirty weeks, and a rigidly prescribed reading term under the supervision of some minister. Mr. Peet as financial agent reported that at least \$100,000 should be raised for the project, of which sum \$25,000 had already been pledged, and it was confidently hoped that this sum would be increased to \$40,000 in Chicago alone.

The Convention in general approved and adopted the plan as worked out by the committee which had been appointed previously. But the control of the Seminary was placed in the hands of a self-perpetuating Board of Directors, consisting of twenty-four members, and representing the midwestern

states. Besides, a Triennial Convention of ministers and delegates was proposed, the duty of which was to review the work of the Board and to elect directors in place of those whose term had expired.

This historic Convention having accomplished its work, the newly elected Board of Directors, headed by the man who had earned the greatest credit for the inception and realization of the idea of establishing the Seminary, and who thus may be regarded more truly the founder of the Seminary than any other man—Stephen Peet—set about its respective task with a will and enthusiasm. Peet, who had secured about \$50,000 in the Middle West, went East to raise some money for the ambitious enterprise. He returned to Chicago just one year after the memorable consultation he had had with his friend Savage in the latter's study at St. Charles, and the same day issued a call for a meeting of the Board for the purpose of organizing it under the Charter recently granted by the Illinois State Legislature. Thereupon, steps were to be taken to elect professors, and open the Seminary for instruction. But the next day, before he could reach home, he became ill, and within less than a week died of pneumonia on March 21.

Deeply grieved at this loss of one of the most energetic and devoted leaders in the enterprise, the Board elected the Rev. A. S. Kedzie as financial agent to carry on the work of the fallen comrade. But the election of the professors was deferred until the next year, possibly because after Peet's death the financial situation did not seem secure enough. In 1856 four professors and six lecturers were elected. It was expected that the institution could begin its service that autumn. But with the exception of one of the professors-elect—Franklin W. Fisk of Beloit College—all the rest declined the offer. Fisk, who ultimately became the first President of the Faculty, described the occasion of his election at the time of his retirement, over forty years later. He had been for two years professor of

Rhetoric and English Literature at Beloit. Receiving the call to the "chair of Sacred Rhetoric" at the projected Seminary "on a spring morning in April, 1856," he was apparently long uncertain as to what to do. "After months of deliberation, the young college professor accepted the invitation with the provision that he give a year's notice to the College before coming to the Seminary."⁴⁹ In the end it was not until three years later, in the Autumn of 1859, that he joined his Seminary faculty colleagues. But since other professors had to be secured, another year rolled by before the faculty was gathered: in 1857 Professor Joseph Haven of Amherst College accepted the chair of Didactic Theology, and the Rev. Samuel C. Bartlett, then pastor of the New England Church of the city, accepted the chair of Biblical Literature.

Owing to the financial stress of the times, the Seminary did not open its doors (and then they were borrowed doors at that!) until a year later. The opening was held on October 6, 1858,⁵⁰ in the parlor of the First Congregational Church, then located at the corner of Washington and Green Streets. During the first year, all class sessions were held there. Either ten or sixteen students were present (the matter is reported differently by Dr. Savage and President Fisk), although the number rose to twenty-eight during the school year. They were housed in the homes of the church members, mostly free of charge. The student body was divided into two classes only—the senior class consisting of five, and the junior comprising twenty-three members. Sixteen of the total number were college graduates.⁵¹

The second year the Seminary moved to another site, even though the building occupied was still a borrowed one. Deacon Philo Carpenter secured a site for the future Seminary buildings, which was located out on the prairies beside Union Park. The First Church had erected there a small frame building, which was put at the disposal of the Seminary.

The institution had started with two professors, Samuel C. Bartlett and Joseph Haven, who were joined a year later by Franklin W. Fisk. The period between the first and the second Triennial Convention (1859-1861) was the most critical: the subscriptions so readily promised were most tardily paid. On the average, the payments were in arrears some \$30,000 annually. These years of difficult beginnings were followed by equally dark years of the Civil War. President Fisk wrote about those years of uncertainty as follows:

Through the long dark years of the civil war, the Seminary kept on its way with numbers diminished and with resources so scanty that, at the Triennial Convention of 1861, it was seriously debated whether the Seminary should close its doors, or struggle on with a single professor. The three professors remained, but during three years, voluntarily relinquished one fifth of their scanty salaries, while as the days went on, in their use of the Lord's Prayer, they found themselves laying special stress on the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread."⁵²

As for the "diminished numbers" of which President Fisk speaks, one may readily realize the situation in the light of a statement by Dr. J. E. Roy made in December, 1862, that the Seminary contributed to the Union armies "forty-two soldiers, one chaplain, and one surgeon."⁵³ The gravity of the condition of the institution is reflected in the resolutions adopted by the Illinois Association, in which the brethren, besides a great deal of advice, wise and otherwise, go on to say that

if we shall be called to mourn the suspended animation of this so promising child of the churches we shall mourn not as those who have no hope but in faith, that Jesus will yet pass by & enter our courts and say to us, She is not dead but sleepeth, & to the Seminary, "Talitha Cumi."⁵⁴

The situation is further illuminated by a revealing letter written during those difficult early days by the Seminary treasurer, L. D. Olmsted, to Professor Fisk:

Pardon me that I have poorly attended to your wants. I enclose a check for \$75.00. I imagine your astonishment, your utter amazement, your complete nonplussedness, when I inform you that this \$75.00 does not come out of my own pocket but that last night there were seventy-eight dollars and several cents in the Treasury of the Chicago Theological Seminary. Collections are improving. Hurrah!⁵⁵

Brighter days came when Philo Carpenter, that staunch friend of the Seminary, came to the rescue of the institution and offered—according to Dr. Fisk—\$20,000 toward the endowment of four professorships on condition that the same amount be raised elsewhere. When this was accomplished, it was indeed “a great event in the history of the young Seminary.”⁵⁶

In order to aid indigent ministerial students during their Seminary course, the General Association at its meeting in 1858 constituted an Education Committee. This body, composed principally of Chicago members, passed on applications for aid and loans, at the rate normally of \$25 a quarter. In 1864 the committee was reorganized by the Triennial Convention and renamed the Western Education Society, but its functions remained the same. The chief difference consisted in the widening of the scope of its sources of support. Among the rules adopted, it was specified that “No young man who uses tobacco will be granted aid . . .”⁵⁷

All these rapid developments testified that Congregationalism was keeping step with the surprising growth of the new metropolis of the West. Chicago, which within ten years, from 1850 to 1860, grew from 30,000 to more than three and a half times that size, namely, 109,250.⁵⁸ Moreover, the encouraging progress made by Congregationalism in Chicago was not restricted to this city alone, even though that was considerable. By the end of the period treated in this chapter, namely 1865, the Chicago Association comprised sixteen churches of which six were located in the city itself. A gratifying growth was

also recorded throughout the state. During the first decade, 1844-1854, fifty-eight churches were organized; in the next decade, 1854-1864, ninety-two. Thus during the twenty years the number of churches grew from eighty-five to two hundred and thirty-five, the number of ministers to two hundred and twenty-seven, and the total number of members from the estimated 2,432 to 14,940.⁵⁹ That Congregationalism had a legitimate field in the state, particularly among the population which had emigrated from New England, and therefore of Congregational antecedents, may be easily inferred from the fact that in 1859, a little over a quarter of a century after embarking on a separate and independent course, Congregationalists already outstripped the New School Presbyterian forces in the state. In that year it was reported that the Congregationalists had exactly the same number of churches as the Presbyterians—159, and only seven ministers less—152 against 159, but almost two thousand more members—10,250 against 8,299.⁶⁰ The total accessions for that year were also remarkably high, namely 2,333, or deducting the losses of 806, 1537 net gain, or some 18 per cent increase. This undoubtedly was an unusual year, and yet it indicated the general trend.⁶¹

Consequently, the gratifying increase in the forces of Congregationalism led to the organization of several new local associations. The Bureau Association was organized from the territory belonging to Central Association. The organization of the new body was recommended at the May, 1857, meeting of the Central Association, and acting on this suggestion a preliminary meeting was held at Dover in connection with the installation of the Reverend Flavel Bascom as pastor of the local church. This assembly then approved the project, appointed a committee to draft a Constitution and Articles of Faith, and appointed July 7 as the date for the Council to organize the new Association. The constituent

meeting was held at Princeton, and was attended by ten ministers and an equal number of delegates. The proposed Constitution and Articles of Faith were duly approved.⁶² On October 21-22, 1858, the Morgan Conference was renamed Congregational Association of Southern Illinois; in 1860 the Central Association further divided its thirty-seven churches into two groups, creating the Central West Association; the next year two other bodies made their appearance, namely: the Central East Association, consisting of seven churches, some of them newly organized, others detached from the Chicago Association; and the North-Western Association, largely made up of churches from the Geneseo Association. The Illinois Association changed its name to Quincy Association in 1864. Thus by 1865 there existed twelve associations—"equal in number to the ancient tribes of Israel" as Dr. Bascom remarked⁶³—as against the three at the beginning of this period.

What were the reasons for this rapid growth? The foremost among the causes of the expansion must be counted the phenomenal increase in the population of the state. In 1848 Illinois had passed the frontier stage of development. The decade from 1850 to 1860 was dominated by a rapid growth of population, the chief cause for which is to be sought in the coming in of railroads. As the result of Senator Stephen A. Douglas's shrewd political maneuvering, Congress granted the state, in 1850, more than 2,500,000 acres of land, proceeds from the sale of which were to be used for the construction of railroads. At the time there existed only two exceedingly short rail lines, one from Chicago to Aurora, and the other from Springfield to Naples. The Illinois Central Railroad Company constructed a line twice as long as the longest road then existing in the country: it ran from Galena in the north to Cairo in the extreme south, thus opening immense stretches of the "prairie province" in the central portions of the state

which hitherto, despite its fertile black soil, had been practically valueless, since lack of means of transportation had deprived it of a market for its produce. Besides this line, the Illinois Central and several other companies opened other sections of the state by constructing railroad lines through them. Consequently, immense stretches of the prairies, hitherto unoccupied or only sparsely settled, filled rapidly: the twenty counties of the "prairie province" increased forty or more per cent in population between 1850 and 1860. "In Champaign County the increase was seven times that of 1850 population, and in Piatt County five times."⁶⁴

Moreover, the immigration of the New England settlers from whom Congregationalism derived most of its membership was facilitated by the opening of the Illinois Michigan Canal, completed in 1848. This greatly helped to make Chicago the hub of this tremendously expanded transportation system. By 1851 the limits of the capacity of the canal were reached because of the great volume of business diverted from the Mississippi River. Because this canal provided cheaper transportation and reached the Eastern markets more directly, Chicago now surpassed St. Louis as the commercial metropolis of the Middle West.

As the result of this revolutionary change, the population was no longer dependent upon the Mississippi River transportation, and therefore could establish increasingly important settlements in the interior of the state. Thus there occurred a shift to the hitherto sparsely settled prairies, which in turn made Illinois an important agricultural state. By 1860 this development reached such a high degree that Illinois became "the center of the agricultural life of the nation."⁶⁵ Although cities grew like mushrooms, Chicago now outstripped all its rivals: by 1855 it was "the largest primary grain depot in the world."

This rapid increase of the population of the state, which

more than doubled its numbers during the decade of which we are speaking—a rate of increase never equalled—naturally reflected itself in the growth of churches, in which Congregationalism shared. It is in this dynamic change that the chief reason for the denominational growth must be sought.

But there were other reasons besides these sociological and economic ones which testify to the inherent dynamic qualities of the young denomination. In the first place, the fellowship was keenly alive to its responsibility for the new immigrants, and zealously sought to bring them into the membership of the existing churches or to organize them into new ones. By this time the Midwest Congregationalists were sufficiently aware of their denominational responsibility to feel that they owed a special duty toward their coreligionists among the immigrant New Englanders. "We hope, therefore, that wherever New England people are found, they will be found in Congregational churches," they declared.⁶⁶ The chief method utilized for this purpose was the revival meeting. Reports regarding "precious revivals" appear in the successive "Narratives of the State of Religion" with almost monotonous regularity. They consisted of "protracted meetings" conducted by local and visiting ministers, and were probably the largest single source of new membership. Thus, for instance, at the annual meeting of 1858 it was reported that "Never has there been a refreshing like the present since the State of Illinois has been inhabited by a Christian people." "The church in Sandwich has nearly trebled its number; and the church in Oswego has increased five-fold."⁶⁷

Another potent aid to the rapid growth of Congregationalism was the Building Fund which had been established by the Albany Convention of Congregational Churches held in 1852, which had reached the sum of \$61,891. Dr. Joseph E. Roy who attended the meeting of this historic convention describes it as follows:

While in my Senior year at Union Seminary in New York, in 1852, I had the privilege of attending the Albany Convention. . . . It was practically an occasion for the East to see whether it could fellowship with the West. And when the brethren of the East, in spite of the insinuations and charges of heresy and disorder made against Congregationalists of the West perceived the grace that was given to the churches of the West,⁶⁸ they gave unto them the right hands of fellowship, and as a token of affection, resolved to put into those hands the sum of fifty thousand dollars to aid them in the erection of sanctuaries. Upon the same Sabbath Day, under the impulse of love . . . this offering produced an over-plus of \$11,891 above the \$50,000 asked, a fund that aided 230 missionary churches in erecting houses of worship.⁶⁹

This generous token of repentance on the part of the East gave aid and encouragement to many weak western churches, and "expedited the permanent establishment of religious institutions in many new settlements by ten or twenty years. Never did the same amount of money do so much good."⁷⁰ The plan contemplated the aiding of two hundred new churches, by granting each no more than \$300. Illinois was allotted the sum of \$8,050 which was distributed among thirty-seven applicants for these grants-in-aid in amounts ranging from \$150 to \$250.⁷¹ In 1855 thirty-six churches were reported actually to have received the aid and a small sum was left over for another applicant. The total cost of churches erected with the aid of the Fund, exclusive of the cost of the lot, was \$70,650. The number of members connected with these churches was 1,757, but the number of attendants on worship in those churches was reported as 4,562.⁷² The plan was so helpful and successful that there was a demand for another similar general Building Fund, but this time in the sum of \$100,000, and if that should fail, that a fund of \$10,000 be raised in Illinois for the needs of the state.⁷³

The lesson inculcated by Lyman Beecher at the Albany

Convention that "if you wish to have martin birds about you, you must put up martin boxes," was so well learned that later the Congregational Union was induced to assume the oversight over the erection of missionary churches, and ultimately the Congregational Building Society was organized to care for this important work permanently.

Finally, since the Plan of Union had been abrogated by an action of the Albany Convention of 1852, and the New School Presbyterians had established a home missionary agency of their own—The Church Extension Committee⁷⁴—the Congregationalists followed suit by organizing, in 1855, the Illinois Home Missionary Association, an auxiliary of the American Missionary Association, which was predominantly a Congregational body; this to some extent aided the spread of Congregationalism in the state. Although the principles of the Illinois Home Missionary Association were non-sectarian and not distinctly Congregational, and the chief aim was the opposition to slavery, yet all its officers were of that fellowship; accordingly it tended to work in its interests. In 1855 the Rev. Flavel Bascom became its general agent. The withdrawal of the Presbyterians from the A.H.M.S. was greatly hastened when that organization, in accordance with a long established rule, refused to aid any churches belonging to presbyteries maintaining independent missionary operations, and devoting its missionary collection to the support of such work. Such a case arose at Nauvoo in 1858, although this was only typical of many similar occurrences.⁷⁵ The remonstrance of the Nauvoo Presbytery asserted that since the church which had been denied aid could not join another presbytery, the proposition amounted simply to this: "Change your ecclesiastical polity, renounce Presbyterianism, become Congregational and we will aid you; if not, then die!"⁷⁶ Consequently, the Presbyterians in the end withdrew their support from the A.H.M.S. (1861), which thus became alto-

gether Congregational. This was the inevitable result. For it had been—quite rightfully and wisely—a rule of the A.H.M.S. to require the co-operation of the ecclesiastical bodies whose churches it aided. Accordingly, the Society refused aid to such Presbyterian churches “whose ecclesiastical bodies are diverting funds from the Society and sustaining a denominational agency for planting new churches and for aiding those which are excluded by the wise and necessary rules of a union Society,” as the case was put in a motion passed in 1859, by the Chicago Congregational Association.⁷⁷

Although the withdrawal of the Presbyterian support naturally had an adverse effect upon the budget of the A.H.M.S., within a short time this loss was made up by the increased support from Congregational churches which had been spurred to great endeavor by the event.⁷⁸ Within fifteen years, “Illinois has set up *eighty-five* of . . . (Congregational) churches and has built *one hundred and twenty-four* houses of worship.”⁷⁹

Illinois Congregationalists shared with their Yankee brethren the distinction of being a “peculiar people,” inasmuch as they were characterized by their particular New England virtues and vices. On the whole, they were radically progressive in their social idealism. In a noble passage, beautifully characteristic of the courageous spirit of the entire body of Illinois Congregationalism, the brethren of the Genesee Association passed, in 1856, the following resolution:

Resolved, that when we as heralds of the Cross cease to be willing to stand up boldly in defense of free speech, a free press, & equal rights to all men, for fear of being accused of meddling with party politics, we shall then cease to be worthy to occupy the position of ministers of the gospel, & unfit to be successors of the Baxters & Bunyans & many preachers of Puritan memory & especially unworthy to hold in our veins the blood of our noble Pilgrim Fathers.

Resolved, that we regard the attempt of certain politicians

to brow-beat the ministry & silence the pulpit on the subject of oppression, as one of the most daring & dangerous aggressions of the Slave Power, to which we will give place by subjection, no, not for an hour.⁸⁰

It is an abundantly attested fact, even aside from the quoted resolution, that the Congregationalists were among the most outspoken and active opponents of slavery—in fact, there was no religious body in the state which exceeded them in this regard. But this subject has been adequately treated in another chapter, and hence need not be here extensively dealt with. Suffice it only to mention that they were strong in supporting President Lincoln in his decision, previously taken, to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. In September, 1861, the Rev. H. L. Hammond, then pastor of the Princeton Church, petitioned the President to emancipate the slaves. He claims that this was the earliest petition of the kind—a claim which cannot be substantiated otherwise.⁸¹ A similar petition was adopted by Chicago mass meetings held on September 4 and 7, 1862, in Bryan Hall. As Dr. Roy describes this important event

The idea of such a memorial was born in the brain of Dr. William W. Patton (pastor of the First Congregational Church of Chicago). I had the honor of circulating the call for the meeting that adopted the memorial. We agreed that the call should be limited to those who were ready to ask for emancipation, thus shutting off discussion on that question. In passing about the streets for signatures, I was deeply impressed with the fact that so many of our business men of first position were Christian men. The call was also signed by the Congregational, Baptist, and Methodist ministers.⁸²

The mass meeting adopted the memorial which was then taken to Washington by Dr. W. W. Patton and Dr. John Dempster of the Evanston Biblical Institute. "President Lincoln heard them graciously," Dr. Roy continues, "bringing out such arguments on the other side as occurred to him.

These were reported in the papers, and *The Chicago Times* suggested that the President had put a bee in the doctors' ears. But Dr. Patton came home expecting a favorable issue, and so set his people to praying in a daily morning prayer-meeting for that result; and while they were praying the announcement came of the preliminary proclamation."⁸³

Some months later, Mr. Joseph Medill, of *The Chicago Tribune*, having returned from Washington, reported to Dr. Roy a message from Secretary Stanton:

Tell those Chicago doctors that their interview did the business; that before their coming the President had been undecided.⁸⁴

Although this may perhaps be accepted as having had some influence upon President Lincoln's decision, it must not be understood as if he had for the first time considered the emancipation of the slaves. He had submitted to the Cabinet the first draft of the proclamation over a month before—on July 22. But the response of his advisors was not encouraging, and the President was in doubt as to the expediency of the measure. When on September 22 he presented his second draft of the proclamation, he was already fully resolved upon the measure, and it was the victory at Antietam which exercised the decisive influence upon his decision.⁸⁵ The Chicago delegation might perhaps, among other influences, have contributed to the President's resolve—although he himself never referred to it explicitly—but cannot be regarded as a decisive factor. Nevertheless, the measure bears testimony to the spirit which animated the Illinois Congregationalists.

Their reformist zeal manifested itself along other lines as well. Thus, for instance, they were exceedingly strict in regard to the Sabbath observance. Reflecting their New England training in the "Puritanical" keeping of the Lord's Day, which was in the sharpest contrast with the usages

derived from other regional cultures, as for instance the Southern, Congregationalists in Illinois fought a manful fight against Sabbath desecration. One minister went so far as to lay down, apparently for his own guidance, the maxim: "Never write, brush boots, nor travel on the Sabbath."⁸⁶ Almost every local association passed frequent resolutions on the subject; the "Narratives of the State of Religion" are full of them. The Geneseo Association voted that "all traveling upon the Sabbath, except strictly as a necessary work of mercy, shall receive the decided disapprobation of this Body."⁸⁷ Another typical resolution passed by the Fox River Congregational Union reads as follows:

Whereas, We, the ministers and the churches associated in the Fox River Union, learn with grief and alarm the commencement of Sabbath desecration in the running of cars on the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad, therefore,

1. Resolved, That we hope that the Directors and Managers of this Road will cease to contend with God, in the open violation of His Holy Sabbath.
2. Resolved, That we shall not feel safe in entrusting our persons or our property to men who disregard the Sabbath.
3. Resolved, That the ministers of all denominations be requested to bring the subject of the desecration of the Sabbath before the people of their charge, and encourage the circulation of petitions requesting the Rock Island Railroad, to discontinue running their trains on the Lord's day.⁸⁸

On the other hand, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad was singled out for commendation and hearty praise for inaugurating "a system to secure to those employed twenty-four hours of rest running no Sabbath day trains. The successors of these noble men have nobly maintained the same course, against the strong influence of greed and competing roads, securing to themselves the honor of conducting a road that has no superior on this continent."⁸⁹

The cause of temperance likewise figures prominently

and quite regularly in the annual reports of the Conference. It was generally regarded as a matter of settled policy that the churches exist as focal centers in the struggle against the prevailing customs of immoderate consumption of liquor and of drunkenness. Many churches wrote into their covenant the pledge of total abstinence. Thus, for instance, the First Congregational Church of Aurora required that "All persons received to membership in this church shall pledge themselves to total abstinence from the use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage." The same was true of the Moline Congregational Church which dominated that "Yankee town" to such an extent that when the election of 1855 buried the prohibition law in most parts of the state, "Moline came out with a majority for it of five to one."⁹⁰ The pulpits resounded with denunciations of the saloon. The well-known reformer, the Rev. Owen Lovejoy, pastor at Princeton, cleverly utilized the name of the village saloon, "Hole in the Wall," by preaching a sermon on Ezekiel viii:7-10, where the prophet was shown a "hole in the wall . . . And he said unto me, go in, and see the wicked abominations that they do here." A good text which the preacher knew how to use to advantage! The saloon sign soon disappeared.⁹¹ At first the temperance advocates cooperated with the Washingtonian organizations. But soon the center of the stage was occupied by another movement which attracted a great deal of popular attention and brought within its ranks many church members. But the ministers found themselves unable to approve it whole-heartedly, because this was a secret, ritualistic society calling itself the "Sons of Temperance," which appeared in the state in 1845. The members paraded in their regalia at holiday celebrations. But the great majority of the ministers were opposed to secret societies as strenuously as to intemperance itself. Thus they condemned on several occasions the organization, although they approved the cause for which it stood.⁹² One catches a

curiously prophetic ring in the resolution adopted in 1852, to the effect that although

the cause of Temperance has not been one of very marked Progress . . . (it was) of significant foreshadowing of something to come in the not distant future. There are clear indications of the approach of another mighty aggressive movement against the whole system of influences by which the vice of Intemperance is sustained and extended.⁹³

Alas! for the impatience of the zealous reformer who insists that the Kingdom of God *must* be just around the corner!

The churches, on their part, placed their trust not only in the methods of moral suasion, but also in political action. The demand for outlawing the sale of liquor altogether secured the passage, in 1851, of a law abolishing all licensing and prohibiting the sale or gift of liquor in less than one quart quantity. But as the anti-prohibition forces well foresaw, the law was impossible of enforcing, and was repealed two years later. Thereupon, the temperance forces agreed to advocate the so-called Maine law. This was adopted in Maine in 1851 and provided that no private persons be allowed to manufacture or sell intoxicating liquors. But city authorities were permitted to appoint an agent "to sell at some central and convenient place within said town or city, spirits, wines, or other intoxicating liquors, to be used for medicinal and mechanical purposes and no other." By 1854 it was estimated that two-thirds of the voters in the state favored the enactment of the plan in Illinois. The Illinois Congregational Conference endorsed the measure several times; in 1854 it went on record "that we regard the passage and enforcement of the 'Maine Law' in this state as one of the most important measures of the day and that we pledge ourselves to recommend to all the ministers and churches of this state heartily to cooperate in measures to promote it."⁹⁴

As has already been mentioned, Congregationalists were

likewise opposed to secret societies. They regarded them all, including the Masons, as essentially opposed to the Church of Christ and to the principles of democracy, and repeatedly condemned them. In 1846 they declared them as "interfering with the administration of justice and the freedom of elections, both in the church and State," and asserted it to be a clear duty of all Christians to have no fellowship with them.

The theological temper of Midwest Congregationalism may be described as progressive as compared with the conservative stand of the Old School Presbyterians, but still tenacious of the fundamental truths of evangelical Calvinism of the school of Nathaniel W. Taylor. The ministry resented the slurs cast upon their orthodoxy by the Old School Presbyterians, and in the fifties the same rift became clearly apparent between them and the New School Presbyterians. The doubt as to the theological soundness of the Midwest Congregationalists had been entertained by not a few of the New England Congregationalists, and it was not the least of the accomplishments of the Albany Convention of 1852 that this mistrust was to a large degree allayed or removed. Thus it put an end to the whispers regarding the "doctrinal unsoundness" of the Western brethren, and dealt such suspicions a deadly blow.

But the gradual drifting apart of the Congregationalists and the New School Presbyterians continued unabated. *The New York Evangelist*, a Presbyterian paper, printed many articles in which aspersions were cast upon the "Oberlinism," "Bushnellism," and the "Taylorism" of the Western Congregationalists, all of which contributed mightily to the growing estrangement between the two bodies. A doughty champion of the Presbyterian purity of faith, and an unquestioned leader of the Synod of Michigan, Dr. George Duffield of Detroit, well known for his aggressive conservatism, published an article in 1856 which minced no words about the

"serious distrust" with which the Presbyterians viewed the matter.⁹⁵

These charges were vigorously resented by the Congregationalists. The truth of the matter is that they were largely unfounded in the sense that the departures from the Calvinism formerly generally held by both bodies were not characteristic of Western Congregationalism alone. The entire Congregational fellowship was drifting toward the theological position embodied in the "Burial Hill Confession" of 1865, in which it was no longer willing to describe its theological stand as frankly "Calvinistic." Thus the one party—the Congregationalists—was growing more liberal, to use a later term for the tendency, while the other—the New School Presbyterians—was recoiling toward the more conservative position which logically resulted in the reunion of the two branches of the church—the New and the Old Schools.

In the first place, as far as Illinois Congregationalism was concerned, it did not deserve to be accused of "Oberlinism," as has already been pointed out. "Taylorism" was indeed prevalent in the West, but so it was in the East, and there was much of it in the New School Presbyterianism itself. One of the clearest statements in regard to the matter was made by Professor Samuel C. Bartlett of the Chicago Theological Seminary in an answer to a charge of doctrinal laxity made against Chicago Congregationalism. Bartlett bluntly repudiated the accusation, and insisted that the ground of difference—which he admitted as existing—was not in doctrine, but in the issue of slavery.

So far as I have power of judging the separation between Presbyterianism and Congregationalism in Chicago *has not arisen from nor been grounded upon a difference of theological views.* The anti-slavery question originally had not little influence in the formation of some (though not all) of our churches. But this ground of difference operates but partially now. . . .⁹⁶

As far as one may judge from the Articles of Faith of the Congregational Association of Chicago, which all ministerial members of that body were required to sign as a condition of their admission, the assertion of Professor Bartlett is entirely borne out. They are Calvinistic enough to affirm: "We believe in the fall of our first parents and the consequent entire depravity, and lost condition of our race."⁹⁷

The Rev. John C. Holbrook of Dubuque, Iowa, formerly the editor of *Congregational Herald*, while attending the General Association of Massachusetts as a delegate from Iowa, declared that it was "his conviction that there was not a church or minister connected with our bodies there (i. e., in the East), that would not be joyfully and eagerly welcomed to the embrace of N. S. Presbyterians, the moment applications were made for admission to Presbytery. Who ever knew of a case of refusal?"⁹⁸

The charge made by Dr. Duffield that the Congregationalists were not capable of "administering the discipline necessary to correct error" is not borne out by the facts, either. There are several cases on record of disfellowshipping Congregational ministers on account of doctrinal errors. The first is that of the Rev. C. F. Hudson who was dropped from membership in the Elgin Association for professing the Universalist principles. Accordingly, it was voted that "the Association ought, and do hereby withdraw all ministerial fellowship from Bro. C. F. Hudson, and cease to recommend him to the churches as an accredited minister of the Gospel of Christ."⁹⁹ Six years later the same Association deposed the Rev. A. G. Hibbard from the ministry, likewise for embracing Universalism:

Resolved, That the Association, condemning his heresies and regarding his course manifestly unministerial, unchristian and immoral, do depose him from the gospel ministry, and do

warn our and all orthodox churches against any longer recognizing him as a minister.

When the Rev. Mr. Hibbard was tried by his church at Dundee¹⁰⁰ for the offense of spreading the Universalist doctrines, the clerk of the church who in the discharge of his duties was obliged to take part in the proceedings was the sixteen-year-old Jerome D. Davis, who later became the founder of one of the earliest Congregational churches in Japan, and the first foreign teacher in the Doshisha University.¹⁰¹

In the same year (1859) the Illinois Association withdrew, "with great grief," ministerial standing from the Rev. J. Mason of Montebello for denying the "divinity of Christ, the immortality of the soul, and the eternal punishment of the wicked."¹⁰² Moreover, the application of the First Congregational Church of Stockton for membership in the Central East Association was declined on the ground that their articles of faith on the Trinity and the punishment of the wicked were intentionally vague.¹⁰³

It is obvious from these examples that the Congregationalists took the matter of discipline seriously. The Morgan Conference in fact voted to withdraw fellowship from one of its ministerial members because of rumors charging him with licentiousness and other unchristian conduct even before he stood trial on those charges. But the subsequent trial established his guilt.¹⁰⁴

Such strict disciplinary measures were applied not only to ministers, but church members as well. A habitual non-attendance of the church brought about the expulsion from membership, in 1853, of a certain member from the church at Cambridge.¹⁰⁵ Another person, applying for membership in that church, was refused because of "certain charges against his Christian character." In another case, a member of the church was cited to appear "before the chh. at their sanctuary

on the 22^d inst. at 2 P. M. and there answer to the charge of a violation of your Cov't with us by habitually neglecting the ordinance of the Lord's Supper & the public worship of God on the Sabbath."¹⁰⁶ He was excommunicated for non-appearance.

Illinois Congregationalists played an unusually important role politically, for although they comprised but a small minority of the population, they represented a compact group advocating a highly unified program of political action which then was of the supreme importance—the abolition of slavery. Being among the most radical advocates of this program, they made their weight felt in the political life of the day, which was dominated by the issue. The most important of such activity was not only the consistent support of all the measures in behalf of the anti-slavery cause, but also in the organization of the political party—the Republican party—which identified itself at the time with the political program of Abraham Lincoln. During this time of furious battle over the issues of slavery, the Free Soilers, Abolitionists, and Whigs saw the wisdom of uniting their scattered forces against the slavery forces. This was accomplished by the organization of a new political party, the "Republican," the initial stages of which date back to 1854. In fact, it was the proud boast of the First Congregational Church of Aurora that within its walls "the Republican Party was born and christened."¹⁰⁷ Although, as a matter of fact, Wisconsin and several other states claimed priority in this matter, the Aurora meeting may at least claim priority in the state of Illinois.¹⁰⁸

In the state convention of the newly formed party which was held at Springfield in October, among the chief leaders was the radical abolitionist, Rev. Owen Lovejoy, pastor of the Congregational Church of Princeton and brother of the martyred Elijah P. Lovejoy of Alton.¹⁰⁹ He continued to play a prominent part in the formation and organization of the

Republican party which later was chiefly instrumental in electing Lincoln as President of the United States; in fact, Lovejoy himself was elected, in 1856, to the House of Representatives, and exerted great influence in behalf of the anti-slavery program.

Moreover, cordial and enthusiastic resolutions in support of President Lincoln and of the prosecution of the war are scattered throughout the minutes of the various associations. Thus the General Association in 1863 resolved "that we do most sincerely thank God for such a President in the time of our nation's peril and that it is our duty as Christian citizens to sustain him by our sympathies & prayers & our earnest effort continually imploring the king of nations to so guide & direct him that he may be the honored instrument of effecting a righteous & permanent peace."¹¹⁰ There seem to have been no "copperheads" among those brethren! Dr. Roy, secretary of the Northern Illinois Agency of the A.H.M.S. reported in 1862 that "We have shared in common with the loyal states in the 'great awakening' of Patriotism; . . . and while many of our congregations are almost literally stripped of young men, . . . yet the Spirit of the Lord is brooding over the churches."¹¹¹ From the statistics drawn up by Dr. Roy, it appears that the Illinois Congregational churches sent one member out of eight into the army.¹¹²

Thus the period with which we are dealing was a most important one, for during it Congregationalism was firmly planted in the state and experienced a rapid rate of development. Nor was Illinois Congregationalism negligible in exerting a considerable influence upon the denomination as a whole. In fact, the first of the national councils in modern Congregational history, which inaugurated the national period in the history of the denomination, was initiated in Illinois. According to Dr. Roy, it was Judge Warren Currier (otherwise unknown to fame) who first proposed the idea. Dr. Truman M. Post, long the leading member of the Morgan Conference,

but at the time of St. Louis, Mo., presented it at the Triennial Convention of the Chicago Theological Seminary held in May 1864. With the approval of that representative body, the matter was referred to the General Association of Illinois, which met at Quincy that same month. This body endorsed it, and appointed Colonel C. G. Hammond of Chicago, Dr. Julian M. Sturtevant, and Dr. Flavel Bascom a committee to confer with other associations "and to act with any other committees that they might appoint for fixing the time and place of meeting and for making arrangements for the same. The several such committees, meeting at the Broadway Tabernacle, New York, in November last [i. e. 1864], issued letters missive by which this body of delegates from the Congregational church of the United States was convened."¹¹³

It was undoubtedly in recognition for these services that Colonel Hammond was elected the assistant moderator of the Council which met in Boston in 1865—the first Council representing all American Congregational Churches since the Cambridge Synod of 1648.

CHAPTER V

CONGREGATIONALISTS AND THE CIVIL WAR

Congregationalists have always been proud of their particularly important role in the emancipation of the American Negro. It may be added just as truthfully that Congregationalists must also bear much of the blame for making the conflict over abolition of slavery "irrepressible." They contributed to the anti-slavery movement elements which aggravated a tendency toward sectionalism which could be overcome only by a Civil War.

Of all the major denominations, Congregationalism alone was confined to the area north of the Mason-Dixon line, did not have to deal with the sin of slavery among its own communicants, and could therefore well afford to be more ruthless in its condemnation of the evil. In states like Indiana and Illinois most Congregationalist settlements lay in areas adjacent to the Lakes rather than to the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, and their strongest economic ties were developed by wheat and flour with the East rather than by corn and pork to the South. Congregationalist concentration was coincident with the portions of these states where Republicanism first became strong. The Civil War, it must be recalled, brought about the ascendancy of the Republican economic program, of which the creation of a free labor market was only one. The much observed Puritan strain in the Republican Party may be an expression of the affinity, one or both ways, between the middle-class virtues and the shop-keeping, industrial and small-farming economy of the North—an affinity which broke

down in the more purely agrarian, aristocratic, and pseudo-feudal South.

A relatively mild anti-slavery sentiment had characterized many Americans for a half century after the Declaration of Independence. Aversion to a slave economy had during that period practically eliminated it in the North and kept it out of the newly organized states lying between the Ohio River and the Great Lakes. A more aggressive agitation, calling for the entire and immediate emancipation of slaves everywhere did not become serious until the late twenties and early thirties. It was this more radical "abolitionist" crusade which made slavery, beginning with the thirties, a divisive issue both in state and church.

The abolitionist movement had from the very beginning received much of its support, and perhaps most of its zeal, from religious sources. It was only one part of a benevolent religious system which had as its object not only the saving of men's souls but also a thorough renovation of human institutions. The immediate impulse for it seems to have been the feverish religious revival of the middle and late twenties. The peculiar role of Charles Grandison Finney in developing the evangelistic technique for that revival, as well as for the broader humanitarian movement which followed it, is indicative of the fact that the benevolent system, including its abolitionist organization, was particularly the creation of religious left-wingers with Calvinistic antecedents: Unitarians, Congregationalists, and New School Presbyterians.

The consequent involvement of the liberal Presbyterians and Congregationalists with the abolitionist movement occurred at the very moment that the Yankee migration to Illinois was getting under way. Thus it happened that the substantial beginnings of Congregationalism and the first radical phase of the anti-slavery movement in Illinois were coincident.

Eventually, disagreement over the anti-slavery issue helped

to identify the Congregationalists in Illinois more plainly by separating them from the Presbyterians,¹ but during the thirties and early forties one must look for most of the anti-slavery activities of Congregationalism not alone in purely Congregational circles but in institutions shared by both denominations, and to individuals who often maintained dual denominational associations.

The moral and political habits of the Yankee in Illinois were often irritating to the Hoosier or Kentuckian settlers who had preceded them and who always outnumbered them in the southern part of the state. While hardly pro-slavery in principle, these earlier settlers had little love for the Negro and no sympathy for the abolitionists' humanitarian crusade in the black man's favor. In 1836, a writer in the *Western Monthly Magazine*, published down in "Egypt" at Vandalia, then capital of the state, described how the state legislators feared the religious institutions of New England. With them came preachers who "meddled in politics." Their objective was to inveigle "pious young men and females into an ignorant and blind support of the schemes of plunder and treason of the abolitionists—which have their origin in the lust for money."

It was true that in 1836 Congregationalism in Illinois was associated with radical anti-slavery doctrines by its own record as well as by general reputation. In November of that year, the Illinois Congregational Association, sitting with ministers and delegates from six Congregational churches in the west-central part of the state, condemned slavery as a sin, called for its speedy abolition, and commended those who despite persecution and obloquy devoted their entire energies to the cause of emancipation. The rigidity of their resolution is manifest in the Association's declaration that no slaveholder ought to be admitted "to our Pulpits and communion tables."

That part of the state where these sentiments were ex-

pressed had witnessed that very year a violent manifestation of bitter resentment of abolitionist activities. Across the river from Quincy, Illinois, the anti-slavery activities of the Rev. David Nelson and his associates in a manual labor school aroused the violent antagonism of the inhabitants of Marion County, Missouri. They compelled the abhorred abolitionists to flee to Adams County, Illinois. The arrival of Nelson in Quincy, wet and muddy from head to foot from wading high waters in the river bottoms, was followed by a wave of excitement in the town. A committee of Quincy citizens took it upon themselves to wait upon Nelson, to protest his coming, and to oppose his alleged purpose of settling with his family. A meeting was held of those opposed to the introduction of abolitionist societies. On the same day another meeting was held in the Congregational Church of those who wanted to protect the right of free speech. An attempt to break up the meeting was weakened by the previous removal of the most likely leader of a riot, and thwarted when men armed with hickory clubs charged out of the church at the mob. In Quincy Nelson established the Mission Institute. He and his school became associated with the Congregationalists.

Meanwhile events were leading up to the most famous of the Illinois anti-slavery riots, those at Alton. The Illinois Congregational Association in November took cognizance of what was happening by approving the course of the *Alton Observer* on the subject of slavery, commending it to the patronage and liberality of the churches, and ordering its proceedings published in that extremely radical paper.

This paper was operated by the Rev. Elijah P. Lovejoy, a clergyman of Congregationalist antecedents who, quite typically, was connected in the West with Presbyterian ecclesiastical bodies. In 1836 he too had been compelled to leave Missouri, removing his paper from St. Louis where even his gradual emancipationist position on slavery was not to

be tolerated. The promise which he made Alton's citizens to confine his journalism to church matters he did not keep, being as a matter of fact impelled to agitation of the more radical doctrine of immediate emancipation, or "abolitionism" as it was called. Impatience with the equivocal stand of the Presbyterian General Assembly on slavery seems partly to have provoked his advance to more radical principles. Several of his presses were destroyed by mob action, only to be replaced by anti-slavery philanthropy. Finally, in November of 1837, he was killed while defending another press against rioting Alton citizens. With him at the time was a guard of twenty sympathizers captained by Enoch Long, a Congregationalist pioneer who had settled in Alton in 1820, where he organized what he believed to be the second Sunday School in the state, for several years the only one.²

Another member of the guard was the Rev. Thaddeus B. Hurlbut, then a Presbyterian, but eventually a member of the Southern Association of Congregationalists in the state. A leader in one of the earlier conflicts with the Alton mob was Joseph T. Holmes, afterward also a Congregational minister.

The martyrdom of Lovejoy was an incident of national importance because of the widespread editorial comment and vocal controversy which it excited, among the last being the famous "maiden speech" of Wendell Phillips in Faneuil Hall. An important item in the literature which exploited the affair for the anti-slavery cause was a book by the Rev. Edward Beecher, President of Illinois College, already suspect among Presbyterians, and later one of the leading Congregational ministers in the state. Beecher certainly was an authority on the subject, having himself contributed to the excitement only a week before Lovejoy's death by addressing a meeting of friends of free speech in Alton at which he expressed himself strongly in favor of defending Lovejoy to the last.

His discourse was interrupted by a stone cast through the church window, after which the door was flanked by rows of armed men to counter the threat of mob action. Beecher completed his discourse. Four days later he was still in Alton, prominently involved in the argument that culminated in the fatal clash of the night of November seventh.

A permanent contribution to anti-slavery organization during the hectic Fall of 1837 at Alton was the formation of the Illinois State Anti-Slavery Society on October 26 and 27. It is indicative of the Yankee element in this development that of the 245 signatures to the call for this meeting well over a half were by residents of only three communities—Quincy, Galesburg, and Jacksonville—all of which were particularly prominent in the early history of Congregationalism. Edward Beecher was prominent in the proceedings. Elihu Wolcott, a founding member of the Congregational Church at Jacksonville, was elected president, and H. H. Snow of Quincy, a Congregationalist, was chosen one of the five vice-presidents. Joseph T. Holmes, Rufus Brown, the Rev. Asa Turner, Dr. Richard Eels, Willard Keyes, and the Rev. William Kirby, Congregationalists from Quincy and its vicinity, were put on the board of managers. T. B. Hurlbut was made recording secretary.

Mention of Jacksonville and Quincy reminds one how much Congregationalism in Illinois owes to the "Yale Band." Three of the thirteen were particularly important to the anti-slavery movement: William Kirby, Lucien Farnam, and Flavel Bascom. The second was the first minister of the church at Princeton, preceding the long ministry of Owen Lovejoy. Bascom probably served the abolitionist cause in its ecclesiastical phase with prominence longer and more consistently than any other minister in the state. Certainly that is the impression gained from the reading of the files of the *Western Citizen*, the chief anti-slavery organ. And the same

source emphasizes the validity of the generalization that Congregationalists were consistently in the van of the anti-slavery crusade—both as individuals and formally as members of Congregational institutions.

Illinois College, a product of the labors of the Yale Band, was an important wedge of anti-slavery sentiment thrust well into the southern half of Illinois. Radical anti-slavery men criticized it for its moderate stand, and it may be true that by the middle forties, especially after the withdrawal of President Beecher and Professor J. B. Turner, it was less notorious. But conversely such an improvement in its reputation would help rather than hinder its substantial influence in that part of the state.

More than a hundred miles farther north, but still within the unfriendly environment of the older settlers of southern extraction, lay Knox College, also founded by Presbyterians and Congregationalists. The decidedly radical stand of this institution on the slavery issue was an appropriate fulfillment of its Eastern antecedents, for the Galesburg colony was a direct academic extension of abolitionism from those New York circles that had produced Theodore Dwight Weld, had approved the famous Lane Seminary Rebellion, and had sponsored the Oberlin migration. The records of the State Anti-slavery Society make it plain that after the Society got under way, the clergy and laity of the Galesburg colony were much the most prominent in its activities until about 1843 when the leadership shifted to Chicago.

The support of the anti-slavery movement in the Military Tract by the Galesburg colony was particularly apparent in Peoria, where collaboration with Moses Pettingil and other Congregationalists³ was frequent. One result of this co-operation was the formation by women from the two towns of a state Female Anti-Slavery Society. In Peoria, as elsewhere, the first efforts at anti-slavery organization were opposed by

mob violence, which in this case attracted more than usual attention because this disturbance was the special business of an anti-slavery convention at Farmington (where a year later the State Association of Congregationalists was organized). In 1848 the Rev. Levi Spencer became the pastor of the Peoria church; he was a product of the Galesburg colony, and a well seasoned veteran of the abolitionist crusade. During his previous pastorate in Bloomington he had been the object of a riotous attack by drunken volunteers for the Mexican War, a military aggression which to the abolitionists was an unholy perversion of patriotism for the extension of slavery.

While protesting numerous violations of their civil rights to a free press, speech, petition, and assembly, many abolitionists themselves felt morally obliged to violate that part of the law securing property rights in Negroes to their owners. Most communities with Congregational churches established before 1861 probably have traditions of the Underground Railroad for fugitive slaves. Most of this traffic began on the Illinois bank of the Mississippi River opposite Missouri. In Quincy, for instance, especial notoriety rested with the Congregationalist, Dr. Richard Eels, who was for years involved in litigation caused by his assistance to escaping bondsmen. From the vicinity of Quincy, the most used routes ran diagonally across the state through Yankee settlements like Plymouth, Mendon, Galesburg, and Princeton, to Chicago. In the last-named place a particularly famous terminal of the underground railroad was the house or store of Philo Carpenter, whose reputation in Congregational history derives most of all from his leadership in founding the First Congregational Church of Chicago.

By 1851, when that church was founded, anti-slavery leadership in Illinois had shifted largely to Chicago. A factor affecting this development was the publication there of the chief anti-slavery paper, the *Western Citizen*. The editor,

Zebina Eastman, was a leader in the withdrawal of forty-eight members of the First Presbyterian Church to form the Plymouth Congregational Church.

These divisions of Chicago churches were local manifestations of the strain which the anti-slavery movement was putting on the old ties between Congregationalists and Presbyterians. The former enforced rules which cut off slaveholders, and even slavery defenders. At its very first meeting in 1844, the State Association made anti-slavery principles a condition of membership. The same could not be done by the New School presbyteries and synods in Illinois without appropriate legislation by the General Assembly, and despite vigorous agitation, such church law was not forthcoming. Congregationalists under the Plan of Union, as well as many of their Presbyterian confederates, were more impatient every time another session of the General Assembly disappointed them.

A striking symptom of uneasiness among the more radical New School Presbyterians appeared in 1850. They were called to meet with Congregationalists in Illinois to consider a union in one ecclesiastical organization. Though other benefits from such an action were anticipated, it was emphasized that "above all it will deliver those of us who are Presbyterian from ecclesiastical connection with slaveholders through the General Assembly, and enable us to withdraw Christian fellowship from them without incurring the charge of violating an ecclesiastical constitution by so doing." Heading the list of ministerial and lay signatures to the call was the name of the Rev. Flavel Bascom, a leader not only in Congregational but also in Presbyterian circles. He had been moderator four years previously of the Peoria Synod. The call originated with members of the Central Association of Congregational Churches, and seems to have been stimulated by President Jonathan Blanchard of Knox College, who was willing that Illinois

Congregationalists give up their General Association to make union with the Presbyterians possible.⁴

A general movement to disfellowship all slaveholders from all Christian institutions was also led and organized in Illinois largely by the Congregationalists. This agitation, of course, intensified that tendency toward religious sectionalism which was already clearly apparent in the late forties. The leading proponent in Illinois of complete division on the anti-slavery issue was Blanchard, who though previously a Presbyterian, had upon his coming to Illinois in 1845 announced that he was going to maintain only Congregational affiliations. About this same time he became involved in efforts to purge the American Board and the American Home Missionary Society of all slavery taint. Other agitators, even more impatient than Blanchard, in September, 1846, formed the American Missionary Association for those with too tender anti-slavery consciences. Blanchard did not quite so soon give up hope for purification of the older missionary organizations. From 1847 to 1850 he earned national notoriety for his arguments before the Board, and for his writings and speeches in the controversy. The desired reforms were not forthcoming. In the Spring of 1850, the General Congregational Association of Illinois censured both the American Board and the American Home Missionary Society for not yet having cast off slavery connections. Late in 1851 Blanchard delivered the annual discourse before the American Missionary Association, and endorsed the purpose of that organization to "divorce Christ's religion from . . . American Slavery."

Deepening, the whirlpool of dissidence widened. In April, 1850, a large Christian Anti-Slavery Convention was held at Cincinnati, by invitation of a committee representing several denominations. Members attended from most of the middle and western states.⁵ To this convention "Blanchard and others" sent a letter attacking the American Board and the American

Home Missionary Society. The latter was accused of increasing rather than diminishing its "slaveholding dependencies—of greatly extending its patronage of slaveholding churches while only slightly expanding its whole missionary force." The convention appointed Blanchard as the member for Illinois on a committee "to hold under general consideration the general subject of Christian action against slavery and to call another convention."

The committee did call for a second convention to meet at Chicago on July 3, 1851. Blanchard took it upon himself to explain to the "Christian Public" in the columns of the *Western Citizen* the purpose of this gathering, pointing out that the assembly would be open to all who desired to dis-fellowship supporters from all denominations. "Fanatics and enemies of the country," said the conservatives in describing the two hundred and fifty respondents to the call. They came from New England, Pennsylvania, and New York, from all the midwestern states, and even from Kentucky. Half of them were from Illinois, and of these, sixty were Congregationalists. Blanchard was elected president. Also he served as chairman of the committee of three appointed to inquire into the slavery connections with home missionary organizations. This committee recommended that by correspondence or through agents those churches in the Middle West and West supported by home missions be asked if they wanted to be assisted by slavery-tainted institutions. Another convention for execution of this plan was suggested.

Two months later, a summons was sent out from Chicago actually to set up a Free Mission organization for the Northwest. As a consequence, "opposers of slave-holding fellowship" met in July, 1852, in Chicago, to perfect the organization and to "take further action in relation to . . . the purification of the Church from the abomination of slavery." The constitution adopted was similar to that of the American

Missionary Association, except that the labors of the new society would be confined to the diffusion of an anti-slavery gospel in "our land." The address which Blanchard delivered to this gathering received the distinction of being quoted at length in the next annual report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, then the chief national anti-slavery organization.

Among the benevolent enterprises condemned for their slavery stand were the American Tract and the American Bible Society. Blanchard said of these:

Every subscriber who pays, and every agent who collects, and every person who receives a shilling of the conscience fund of the United States, which is raised by that religion which allows slavery to its communion table, either consciously or unconsciously utters a silent confession of faith, that slaveholding is privileged in the Church of God.

On Blanchard's motion, a Triennial Convention of Ministers and Delegates of the Congregational Churches in the Northwest gave its approval, in 1858, to the American Reform Book and Tract Society, commended it to the confidence and patronage of the Congregational churches, and expressed the hope that the Society would soon become national in its influence as in its object, "the divorce of American slavery from American principles." In 1859, the Western Tract Convention was organized by anti-slavery seceders from the American Tract Society.

The radicals who were thus parting the South from the North were not content to leave the area south of the Ohio secure with its "sin." The American Missionary Association supported in Kentucky an offensive action, led by John Gregg Fee, which had as its purpose the establishment of anti-slavery churches in the very South itself. Among the half a dozen notably active in this aggression were two young Congregational preachers who had come into this field from Illinois:

James Scott Davis and John A. R. Rogers. The former, as Kentucky correspondent of the *Congregational Herald*, kept the Northwest well informed of this daring enterprise. This impingement upon the slavery territory was eradicated when the South was shocked to stern precautions by John Brown's more bellicose raid on Harper's Ferry. Davis, Rogers, and the others were chased back across the Ohio River. Davis returned to Illinois where he continued his work among the pro-slavery people immediately across the river from Kentucky, eventually settling as pastor of the southernmost Congregational church of the state, at Hoyleton, a Yankee settlement drawn deep into unfriendly Egypt by colonization of the Illinois Railroad. Statements which Davis made to the General Association of Illinois in 1860 were followed by resolutions commending the work of the American Missionary Association, endorsing the work of its agents in the slave states, and expressing a hope for the resumption and enlargement of its activities in that section.

Militarism rather than evangelism had become the method for combating slavery when the next annual meeting of the General Association convened. Religious sectionalism, which Congregationalists probably had encouraged more than any other denomination, had to a great extent prepared the Union for a division. It was the feeling of not a few that the erring sisters might depart in peace. Very significant was the editorial opinion of the *Congregational Herald* during those trying months between Lincoln's election and his inaugural, when the slave states one by one seceded from the Union. In December of 1860, the attitude of the *Herald* was that all things considered probably the Union ought to be preserved. In February of 1861 it was, however, sternly opposed to any preservation of Union involving compromise with, or concessions to, the "rebels" and "traitors." They should not remain in, nor return to, the Union unless the outrages as-

sociated with slavery maintenance were redressed. By March the paper was openly and definitely for severance from the South. War to coerce the seceders would probably fail of its object, and end slavery in a manner so violent as to ruin slave and master alike. Conciliation to woo the South back would mean concessions to slavery that would destroy liberty, and would perpetuate those moral ties to slavery under the Federal Constitution which were already odious to many people. The editorial concluded:

We believe that the path of wisdom, indicated by right principles and the events of God's providence, lead to the recognition of the Southern Confederacy, as speedily and as peacefully as possible, by the assembling of a National Convention to reconstruct the Union upon a basis of liberty alone.

It is quite conceivable that division of the United States might have come in just such a way. It is to events of a political and to factors of an economic rather than of a religious character that one must look for explanation of the failure to split the Union.

In anti-slavery politics the Congregationalists of Illinois had been prominent beyond the proportion of their voting strength. The obligation to vote according to religious convictions on the slavery question was specifically stipulated by the Illinois Association in 1838, two years before political parties with slavery as a particular issue were in the field. The first political convention in the Northwest nominating an anti-slavery presidential ticket was, significantly, held in the Congregational settlement at Princeton. Congregationalists were notably active during the forties in the Liberty Party, the anti-slavery organization which served effectively as an instrument of agitation, but which could hold out no real promise of office to those who served as its state and local candidates. Despite the strong popular prejudices against the participation of preachers in politics, Congregational clergymen were very

forward in their political activities. Of the nine delegates sent by the Liberty Party of Illinois to the Buffalo Convention in 1848 to form the Free Soil Party, three were Congregational ministers.⁶ One of them was the Rev. Owen Lovejoy, brother of the anti-slavery martyr, and for many years pastor of the Princeton church. After years of activity in the Liberty and Free Soil parties, he was elected as a Republican to Congress in 1856. He served in that body until his death not long after the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect. Though always an uncompromising radical on the subject of slavery, he was an early and loyal supporter of the much more moderate Lincoln, and willing to efface himself from the party contests where Lincoln's political chances were likely to be reduced by identification with Lovejoy's abolitionism. Similarly in Congress Lovejoy, while as ruthless as the best (or worst) on the slavery issue, differed from many of the anti-slavery members in supporting Lincoln's conciliatory policy.

Forty days after the first gun-fire on Fort Sumter, the State Association convened, admittedly conscious that for the third time the liberties so closely associated with the Puritan tradition in England and America were at stake in a military contest. With evident pride, the meeting advised (and warned) the civil and military authorities "that no armies ever were more effective than those of the English Parliament, in which Richard Baxter was a chaplain, and that the invincible regiment of that army was 'the Ironsides' led by Oliver Cromwell and composed of godly men." Unanimously the delegates defined the rebellion as not only treason against the United States, but "a revolt against the Divine scheme for the world's advance in civilization and religion" as well. The war was pronounced the "ripe and bitter fruit of slavery from which the nation must be forever relieved." Pastors should by their discourses "direct the current of national purpose and elevate military ardor," while the churches

should "send forth their members in the spirit of Christian patriotism to fight the battles of their country."

Congregationalists in their particular as in their general affairs soon felt the demands war made upon them. By 1864 five ministers associated with the State Association were army chaplains, two more were hospital chaplains, another was a superintendent of a Soldier's Home, and one was an agent working among loyal white war refugees. Denominational benevolences reflected the pinch on purses by the new war charities, such as Soldiers Aid and the Sanitary Commission, the Civil War equivalent of our Red Cross. The war produced a kind of hero new to America: the female war nurse, recently highly exemplified by Florence Nightingale during the Crimean War, and now nobly fulfilled by American women. Among the most famous of these last was "Mother" Bickerdyke, who entered the service in response to a call read in the First Congregational Church of Galesburg for help to sick soldiers in southern Illinois. The widows and orphans of this, the world's greatest war between the exile of Napoleon and the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, also merited an old but required a new compassion from neighbors and Samaritan strangers.

The "war aims" of Illinois Congregationalists were set forth in resolutions adopted in 1862. They demanded legal abolition of slavery, establishment of diplomatic relations with the Negro republics of Hayti and Liberia, admission of the colored man into the United States army (including especially those in the rebel states), and defeat of that portion of a proposed new constitution for Illinois which perpetuated legal discriminations against persons of color. Within a year a series of actions by the Federal government, notably Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, had realized a considerable portion of this program of objectives, to the declared satisfaction of the State Association.

Shriving the nation from slavery's sin, however bloody the penance, did not eradicate the shame of the freedman's plight. Illiterate, proscribed from the society which now had no fixed place for him, bewildered and misled as to his new economic status, often moved by religious moods of a distinctly primitive nature, he presented a complex of problems which was then and still remains the most difficult for Americans to solve, or even to understand. Illinois Congregationalists entered upon the task with a zeal to which later generations of church-goers were hardly to do credit. The American Missionary Association, with Congregational approbation and support, now adapted itself to the freedman's needs, religious and educational. Within a year after the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect, the muster of Illinois Congregational clergymen included three who were teaching freedmen, another who was an agent of the Freedman's Relief Society, an "agent for colored people," and the secretary of the Northwestern Freedman's Aid Commission.

Mingled with this evidently sincere compassion for the former slave was a very real vindictiveness against his former master. Already in 1862 with the hope that the rebelling states should be treated as territories "until received as States *de novo*," the opinion was expressed that the rebels must not claim any protection from the government either in their persons or property, and that their leaders be either banished or punished capitally. There ought to be no negotiated concessions made to the enemy, such as were suggested by the Copperheads. In the Spring of 1863 the agitation of these appeasers became a particular source of public excitement when their leader, C. L. Vallandigham of Ohio, was arrested by Federal troops and, contrary to the express wording of the law, tried before a military tribunal, where he was convicted. In the same month in Illinois, the Congregationalists labeled all those who opposed the administration's conduct of the war, and

all those who professed a desire for peace, and who favored recognition of the independence of the South, as treacherous and treasonable. It was asked that they receive "a retribution of utter and unmingled abhorrence."

Illinois voters during the campaign year of 1864 must have regarded as an endorsement for Lincoln's reelection the formal assurances given by Congregationalists in their annual convention that they had confidence in the President and his measures. His death within less than a year was a "bitter bereavement" of one honored for his "stainless integrity and nobility of goodness among men." As an Illinoisan he was mourned "with a tenderer sorrow as one nearer and dearer to us as a fellow citizen long since loved and prized for his worth."

Yet in the same document with those affirmations of grief there is evinced a feeling not all harmonious with the kindly policy which Lincoln had already inaugurated for the now prostrate South. Rather, Illinois Congregationalists approved the program of the Radicals who had already become Lincoln's chief foes. Enfranchisement of the Negro was demanded, and in the very name of Lincoln's martyr blood the "indiscriminate mercy to rebels" was denounced as "cruelty to the nation."

In May, 1865, the new President, Andrew Johnson, whom the Radicals of Congress then expected to control, was pledged by Illinois Congregationalists their "loyal, trustful, prayerful hearts." The loyalty, the trust, and one suspects even the prayers did not last long, for Johnson adopted Lincoln's moderate method for treatment of the conquered section, and insisted upon using it despite an ever angrier Congressional majority led by the Radical Republicans. A partisan polemic supporting the latter was published in 1866 (in the form of resolutions on the state of the nation) for the Illinois convention of Congregationalists. Johnson, it declared, no longer deserved their trust, for he had failed to fulfil his pledges; he

had "apostatized from himself." He had failed to keep an alleged promise to make "disloyal men take back seats," and was giving power to the spirit of "treason, caste, and rebellion." In the most explicit language, co-operation was withheld from the President and offered instead to the "loyal" Congress.

Thus to the glorified Roundhead hostility to Cavalier, and to the prejudices between Yankee and Hoosier, were added those animosities between Republican and Rebel which dominated political behavior for a generation, created the Solid South, and in the long run prevented an effective elimination of those injustices suffered by the Negro to which Congregationalists had so long been sensitive.

CHAPTER VI

THE PERIOD OF GROWTH, 1865-1900¹

A quarter of a century after the organization of the General Association, Illinois Congregationalism was still in the condition of a frontier dependency of the northeastern part of the United States. Almost 250 churches were on the denominational roster but one-fourth of these were dead, destitute, or supplied by pastors from neighboring churches. Of the others, less than one hundred were self-supporting, and one-third, at least, were still receiving aid from the American Home Missionary Society. In that year, 1869, the congregations affiliated with the State Association contributed a little over \$5000 to the A.H.M.S., but received in return four times that much assistance. Moreover, church construction also depended considerably upon outside help through the Congregational Union, the number of churches becoming thus indebted having just passed its peak in 1867. Eastern Congregationalists complained that after a quarter of a century of benevolent support, the churches of Illinois and other Midwest states ought to be able to sustain themselves.

There were ample signs that Illinois Congregationalists were ready for self-dependence. In 1867 there was established in Chicago a denominational magazine called *The Advance*, which absorbed two older periodicals in Iowa and Wisconsin. The adulthood of the Midwest was implicit in the declared intention of this paper to become for this region what the *Congregationalist* was to Boston, and what the *Independent* was to New York. In Chicago, the editor boasted, there was already growing up the "ecclesiastical center" of the denom-

ination for the interior of the nation, in confirmation whereof he pointed to the Chicago Theological Seminary and to the branch offices of the benevolent agencies.

Consistent with this pride was the agitation in *The Advance* during the late sixties for making the midwestern states assume the entire expense of home missions within their own borders. Aside from the shame of prolonged acceptance of eastern charity, there was the prospect that if once home missions became self-dependent they could then be conducted in "our own way untrammelled by the wisdom or unwisdom of secretaries and officers in New York." At its quarter-centennial celebration, the General Association of Illinois approved the principle of self-sufficiency and set the year 1875 as the date by which it should be accomplished. In 1871 it decided to form itself into a Home Missionary Society for Illinois, which was to be an Illinois auxiliary of the American Home Missionary Society.

In 1873, in the face of the severe financial panic, that body undertook to assume full responsibility for the entire expense of home missions in Illinois. Finally, or so it was hoped, in 1874 it was announced that collections had exceeded the needs for self-support with a surplus of nearly a thousand dollars. Actually, hard times during the next two years compelled a renewal of help from the parent society; but with the return of better economic conditions this relapse was definitely overcome. A reorganization of the state society in 1878 gave it greater autonomy in control of funds and policies. By 1880 Illinois was not only taking care of itself but undertaking to help that farther frontier on the Great Plains and in the Rocky Mountains—the "New West" as it was called. During the eighties, home missions began to displace foreign missions as the leading object of benevolence from Illinois Congregationalists, and kept that relative leadership throughout the nineties. Just before the hard times of 1893, contribu-

tions to domestic missions had reached about \$60,000 a year.

By the middle eighties, Congregationalists of Chicago, unduly impressed by the astounding growth of their city, presumed to compare its attractions with the old center of Congregationalism at Boston, and the latter was spoken of as "a dear little place . . . on the bay." The occasion, which had to do with a call to a Boston minister, should have reminded them that Illinois was still very much dependent upon the educational facilities and ministerial resources of the East, however much money the young churches of the new Midwest metropolis might now have to spend. In fact it was admitted as late as 1880 that Midwest colleges needed to be developed so that fewer of the young men would go East. And to the end of the century there was constant complaint that the colleges of this region were failing to supply enough men for the ministry.

Complete data on the educational antecedents of the clergy in Illinois during this period are not available, but information collected in 1886 makes certain generalizations possible. Where educational dependency on the East was most apparent was in the college training of the ministers. Of those whose collegiate training was listed, only twenty-two were from Beloit, Wheaton, Knox, and Illinois colleges. These were the colleges which the Congregationalists of Illinois discussed in their meetings, endorsed, supported, and somewhat irregularly investigated through official visitors. Yet in the middle eighties Yale, Dartmouth, and Amherst had still furnished more pastors than these four midwestern schools combined. It was probably true that in Illinois the educational strength of the denomination was dissipated in too many places, for in addition to the colleges mentioned above, there was also Rockford College for women, which expected and received Congregational patronage.

In the case of the seminary at Chicago, which for prac-

tical purposes had competition only with Oberlin, the institution waxed strong much faster. By 1890 it boasted that only one seminary in the United States was larger. By far the greatest number of Illinois ministers with seminary training had received it in the Chicago Seminary, though a considerable minority had been to Yale or Andover.

The persistence of this strong New England element is evinced by the educational ideals of Illinois Congregationalists, particularly in their efforts, right up to the end of the nineteenth century, to establish here "the good old fashioned New England Academy" with its uncompromising emphasis on the "ancient classics." It was remarked, apparently in all seriousness, that after all "when the Holy Ghost sought to make known the things of Christ to the world, he chose the Greek language as the fittest literary vehicle for the purpose." Knox and Illinois College presidents particularly led this agitation during the seventies, being convinced that such schools were essential feeders for the colleges. It was charged that the public schools did not adequately foster the desire for higher education; and that even when they did, their graduates, having had a secular background, went to the state universities. For the sake of an adequate Congregational ministry it was therefore deemed necessary to establish here in the West the equivalents of Phillips Academy or Williston Seminary in the East. Direct results of this conviction were the fostering, by the Rock River Association, of an academy at Port Byron, and by the Southern Association of a similar institution at Albion. Other secondary schools of the same general character, regarded as Congregational in their connections, were located at Paxton and Monticello. There were also, of course, the academies associated with Knox and Illinois colleges.

These educational foundations were against the flowing tide of public education. Within a few short decades the academy movement failed. Nevertheless, the denomination

deserves appreciation for doing much to raise the level of schooling in this state. In the long run it was the commonwealth and not the denomination that profited thereby, for the college youth that these institutions prepared did not go into the ministerial profession in anything like the numbers that were needed. For this disappointment, not education, but the unattractiveness of the ministry was mostly to blame.

It was complained that the income of the average minister was no higher than that of the better class day laborers, which was probably true. As illustrative we may take the figures for 1885, a good year for statistics, for it comes nearly midway between the Civil War and the end of the century, and also nearly half way between the Panics of '73 and '93. In 1885 the most common yearly salary for Congregational clergymen was between \$500 and \$750. A minister living on that income might, it is true, be comforted by the hope that he would shortly be called to a more profitable charge which paid up to \$1000 or \$1250. A good many churches did pay salaries that high. But to get beyond that income level he must have an unusual talent or extraordinary luck. There were only nineteen churches that paid \$2000 or more. The economic distance toward the three Chicago congregations that paid \$5000 or more must have seemed like a chasm to twenty-three down state churches which paid their pastors less than \$500.

Making ends meet while still keeping up professional appearances was surely hard for most of the preachers. Typical rental for their homes early in this period was between \$250 and \$300; and this must have come out of the salaries in most cases, for parsonages were not the general rule. In this last respect the situation did improve somewhat; where there had been only thirty-six parsonages in 1872, there were twice that many in 1885, and almost three times that many in 1890. Furthermore, parsonages were more common out-

side the Chicago area; that is to say, where salaries were lower, generally speaking, parsonages were more often available.

Salaries were not only often inadequate, but were paid in some churches by the quarter, and by a few only at the close of the year. Frequently they were supplemented by cheap expedients and haphazard gratuities. Late in the century these were sometimes "surprise" gifts of cash or furnishings, but during most of the post-bellum decades they were usually "socials" held at the minister's home. These were called "donation parties" or "donation visits," and brought in odds and ends of apparel, ornaments, and food. It was always uncertain how much of these material comforts would remain undevoured or unmussed after the flock, sated with the evening's eatables, returned to their own homes. The Congregational Treasury of Merits must still be over-full with the humbled pride of ministers, and one suspects even more of their wives and daughters. One wonders, furthermore, what happened to the poorly paid preacher and his wife in old age. There was through the years covered in this chapter an associational fund for families of deceased and disabled ministers, and in 1879 a State Ministerial Relief Society was organized; but at the beginning there was only the sum of \$265 for five families and at the end of this period still only about \$1000 for seven families.

Both cause and effect of this economic unattractiveness of the ministerial profession was the too frequent change of pastorates. In 1872 it was reported that the average length of Congregational pastorates in Illinois was only three and one-half years, and that only nine ministers had been stationed in the same place for more than seven years. This fickleness and insecurity in the pastoral office, natural during frontier days and during the disturbing years of the Civil War, did not improve. In 1890 there were not more than twenty-five

churches in the state that had the same pastors they had had four years previously; and there were only six ministers that had been in their places ten years and more. Congregationalists were very conscious of the fact that in this respect they had failed to reproduce faithfully the institutional features of original New England Congregationalism. Particular criticism was pressed on the neglect and decay of the proper practice of formally installing or dismissing ministers by a council. Only twenty-three churches by 1900 had inducted their pastors in that more careful, elaborate, and permanent manner. Though its desirability was commonly admitted, there was on the part of some of the ministers who had been established in their congregations in less conventional manner considerable disposition to decry its necessity or at least to explain its avoidance. They denied that council installations were essential to the tenure of the pastor, doubted that they secured permanency, and suggested that the councils might encroach on the independency of the churches. Earlier, immediately after the Civil War, it was pointed out that the custom could not be rigidly enforced in a "new country," but twenty years later it was explained that it was practically impossible to restore it.

At the General Association meeting of 1890 it was complained that more than one-third of the churches had changed pastors during the twelve months preceding. So great in recent years had been the disposition to move that some of the brethren were seriously remarking that since the denomination in actual practice had an itinerant ministry, it might well, like the Methodists, have a systematic one. No alterations were actually made in the polity of the denomination, but during the nineties attention was given to evils resulting from the too frequent changes of pastorates. In 1896 a committee was entrusted with fashioning some scheme whereby pastorless churches and churchless ministers could be brought together. Within two years a Ministerial Bureau was estab-

lished in Chicago to assist in the placement of preachers in vacant churches.

Under the circumstances, it is not strange that young men were less than formerly interested in becoming preachers. To the inadequate compensation and the insecurity was added the deterring factor of a decline in the professional distinction attending the ministry. The decades were those when the secular powers in our American society made their most rapid aggressions upon our culture—the geniuses widely acclaimed in that time were not those of the spirit, mind, or heart, but of economic “success.” The “good business man” was becoming the model of the community. A formal report to the General Association of Illinois in 1871 complained frankly that there was “almost a mania for business, as about the only ambition worthy of spirited young men.” It is not without significance that by the middle eighties the public opinion disliked the professional garb of the minister, and only a few Congregational clergymen still uniformly wore the closely buttoned coats, high collars, and immaculate white neckties of an earlier generation.

The rising standard of living which occurred during these years of rapid economic expansion did show in the more substantial and elaborate church edifices in which the laymen wanted to worship. The total value of church buildings reported in 1877 (the first year for which full data are available) was \$1,772,825; in 1900 it was \$3,558,998. The ten years after the Civil War were marked by considerable church building. This tapered off rather sharply in the hard times following the Panic of 1873, but revived again in the boom times of the late eighties and very early nineties. For the individual properties, exact and complete figures are not available during the early years, but some interesting contrasts may be depicted. In 1872 at least forty-four churches had no buildings of their own; but twenty years later only fifteen congregations

still had to use a hall or school as a place of meeting. How the direction of economic development was urbanizing the concentration of the wealth of the denomination is evident in another contrast revealed in 1872: four Chicago churches altogether cost somewhat more than half a million dollars, which almost matched the total cost of the 106 others reported, for the evaluation of the latter was only a little over \$600,000. The average individual cost for these last was only \$5,700. In 1900, four of the seven edifices costing more than \$100,000 were in Chicago. The other three were the Rockford Second Church, the Galesburg Central, and the Peoria First. The combined valuation of these last two, however, did not equal that of the Union Park in Chicago, which was a great structure the auditorium of which would seat 3500 persons. For Chicago itself this had meant a gigantic improvement in one generation, from shortly after the Civil War when of the nine churches only three were "comfortable and pleasant" and only one was paid for, and five congregations worshipped in temporary frame buildings, and one had no meeting house of its own whatsoever.

The dedication of a new building for the Union Park church in 1871 may be taken to mark the coming to Illinois Congregationalism of a new style of architecture: the ecclesiastical amphitheatre. Its semi-circular floor plan contrasted with the long narrow auditoriums formerly in vogue. The new design was intended to draw an immense audience "snugly round the preacher," and to bring each individual within easy sight and hearing; in short, it had "no back seats." Attention to the acoustical problem was becoming imperative; by 1890 there were ten Congregational churches in the state that could seat a thousand communicants. Often these edifices with their distinctly histrionic purposes were equipped with a new kind of pulpit. This dispensed with the "ancient barricade in front of the preacher" and substituted a small desk on an open platform. The speaker's

person was no longer concealed. Between him and his auditors was now only a slender stem topped with a small lectern. The architectural forms used to decorate the churches of this new fashion were less affected by the Gothic mania of the middle of the century, and turned more to the pretensions of the Romanesque so popular during the last quarter of the century. More functional was the practice, which became increasingly common, of constructing kitchens and social or recreational halls in the churches. In fact it was sometimes true that even before the rest of the building was completed these basement rooms were used for worship services.

During the Chicago fire, those churches which had such kitchens and halls were able to do real service to hundreds of homeless citizens. Even the auditoriums of the more costly edifices were used, the pew cushions of the well-to-do members becoming beds for weary refugees of all classes. Three Congregational church buildings were themselves destroyed in that holocaust: Moody's Independent Church, the Lincoln Park Church, and the New England Church. The last was one of the most elaborate structures in the city. At the same time the home of every member of its congregation was laid in ruins. The moral reaction to this catastrophe is very interesting. The editor of *The Advance*, which lost its office and all property to the last pound of type and page of manuscript and sheet of printing paper, declared that the blow was "necessary in the interest of rightcousness." He bowed to the chastening hand of God, but was nevertheless unwilling to admit that Chicago deserved to be treated like Sodom any more than did New York. Actually, recovery was rapid, and more than complete within three or four years. *The Advance*, for example, moved into a new four story building, which became a kind of headquarters for Congregationalism in this region. It also housed the representatives of the Congregational Publication Society, the specialists in Sunday School literature, the district

secretaries of the American Board and of the American Missionary Association, the superintendent for the American Home Missionary Society, and the secretary of the Chicago Theological Seminary.

Ecclesiastical building was of course on a much smaller scale beyond Chicago, and outside of the limits of the smaller downstate cities it remained quite simple. Some change was nevertheless apparent in the rural areas already by the early seventies. Wood rather than brick or stone still prevailed as the material of construction, but the old "meeting house," built after New England models, was now altered. This had often turned out to be an ungainly square structure, frequently without a spire or belfry; the side walls were perforated with two rows of small windows and painted a "staring white." The new taste regarded this as the "extreme of plainness, not to say of ugliness." Rural churches now became better proportioned, and had some "relieving projection, tower, or spire," and were painted a "modest drab, soft to the eye." Not all country churches, however, received such attention to their appearance, and in the eighties it was still complained that painfully little care was given to their surroundings. Many of them stood out on the prairie "like barns, without fence, tree or shrub," and cattle or swine came up to the very thresholds.

The financial structure of the Congregational churches also underwent a slow alteration during this generation. At first the renting of pews was very common. Eight of the Chicago churches charged such a rent in 1870, the amount averaging sixty to seventy dollars per annum. A strong single illustration of the custom is that of the Union Park Church which about that time had an income of \$20,000 from pew rentals, an amount exceeding its annual expenses. However, there was a mounting sentiment against the practice, for it was argued that the public did not feel free to enter churches

with rented pews, that the rental discriminated against the poor, and that by paying for his pew the rich man could in fact avoid a contribution to his church commensurate with his wealth. Some who agreed with these criticisms asserted that nevertheless the renting of pews was the only sure and practicable way to finance a church. And it was true that during the seventies quite a few churches which had tried free seats with free will offerings went back to the renting of pews. Churches such as Galesburg, which during that decade went over successfully to free seats with a weekly offering system, were specially noted; and a weekly pay envelope method was introduced in a number of cases. When Oak Park in 1876 went back to pew rentals it still continued to collect them by weekly envelopes. During the eighties the free seat custom became quite common, especially among such important out of Chicago churches as Quincy, Peoria, and the Rockford First. Free seats seem to have been the general rule in the last decade of the century, though in a few organizations where the pews were free there still were "fixed sittings."

This change in the economic organization of the churches seems from the perspective of the present better fitted with a democratic society. It was part also, however, of a general relaxation of the old religious community, the strength, orderliness, and discipline of which had in the local units of Congregationalism compensated for its loose denominational organization. One reads less and less of activity by the church as a judiciary body, and one suspects that there is less concern with the spiritual fitness of the communicants. This may be evinced in the long lists of permanently absent members, never formally dismissed by action of the church. The hold on the entire family unit might be weakening, of which the abandonment of the fixed family pew might be the symbol, if not the effect. Another symptom might be that after 1880 only about one-third of the church members were men; whereas

before the Civil War the proportion had been two-fifths.² Weakening of faithfulness to church duties is perhaps also suggested by the occasional report of a church that held only one Sunday service, and of a few city churches that sometimes suspended meetings during the summer months.

On the other hand, there was a notable enlarging and improvement of the activities particularly designed for young people. Beginning in the late sixties, the haphazard methods of Sunday School instruction were reformed by the introduction of Uniform Lessons. This was accompanied and followed by a tremendous expansion in the quantity and variety of Sunday School literature, the publication of which became a major industry. During the early eighties, the Christian Endeavor movement was started and rapidly extended. Later in the same decade the increased attention to youth was also manifest by the infiltration from other denominations of the custom of Children's Day. During the nineties, King's Daughters and Boys' Brigades appeared.

In the worship habits of adults there appeared the first clear signs that the Congregational phase of Puritanism was softening its ancient aversion for the more elaborate forms of conservative ecclesiastical bodies. The day was definitely past when a Congregational college president in Illinois would specifically require that his students attend school on the Christmas day. Beecher in Galesburg, during the late sixties, had gotten his church to vote that a Christmas tree be used in the Sunday School. And in 1872, the First Church in Chicago introduced the responsive reading into its morning services. This last innovation was, however, the subject of special comments. A New Haven professor's opinion was published in 1876 to the effect that the responsive reading was an undesirable novelty supported by those with a taste for "form," and opposed by those with an "earnest spirit of devotion." The practice was denounced as "meaningless," and as a hin-

drance to the "intelligent sense" of God's truth. Nevertheless, the tendency toward this practice, while gradual, was not to be stemmed. By 1894 a Chicago pastor affirmed that "among progressive and evangelical Congregationalists there is a strong bias to liturgical forms, observances of feasts, fasts and seasons and—shall we dare to think so?—to sacerdotalism." He cited the revived interest in Lent, and in special services, retreats, and meditations during the Passion Week.

While this return to some liturgical forms was significant, its fuller development was delayed until after the turn of the century. The feature that still dominated spiritual observances was the sermon; in fact, religious forensics probably reached full bloom during this autumnal quarter of the century. The great Beecher of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, New York, set the fashion of pulpiteering for the sophisticated, however much his unconventional conduct and inconsistent theology embarrassed his fellow Congregational clergy. The other great influence on homiletic procedure came out of the Plymouth Church of Chicago, from a layman, the famous Dwight L. Moody. Though there was at first some slight disposition to condescend to Moody, because of his limited education, and his undependability as theologian or exegete, it was impossible to ignore his effective use of straightforward Anglo-Saxon vocabulary, his forthright interpretation of the Scriptures, his masterly attention to the organization of religious activities, and his grasp of publicity methods. He was supported in his early work by a potent merchant prince and before long all were more than willing to approve him. Congregationalists were proud to claim as their own this leader of the greatest religious revival in the English speaking world since the days of Wesley and Whitefield. After Moody's first great evangelical triumph in the British Isles, Chicago was more than willing to compete with other American cities for his services. He did return several times, the last during the Columbian exposition.

Teamed with Moody was the famous singer, Ira Sankey. Though he had comparatively little musical training and a voice of limited compass, there was no denying his effectiveness as a musical leader of the crowds which time after time returned to attend the revival partnership. An accomplished musician of the Chicago Theological Seminary faculty remarked, "When he puts his finger down, once in a while, upon just the wrong key, it does make me jump; still, I can't help liking to hear him." Sankey's kind of assistance at Moody's meetings set a musical style for revival technique. Furthermore, it made a strong impression on ecclesiastical singing, for the melodies were contagious and the rhythms strong. The songs he used were distributed by the tens of thousands by the publishing firm controlled by Moody's brother-in-law.

The relaxation of church discipline, the open-mindedness that could embrace the unconventional Beecher, the unprecedented Moody, and the novel Sankey, were indicative of the increasing latitudinarianism of the denomination. Distinctions of doctrine were becoming uninteresting and unimportant. It would be impossible to generalize on the creed of the loosely joined churches, but that there was no formal change in the General Articles of Faith of the State Association does not prove that there was theological conservatism during this period. Occasionally, one at first sees evidence of very conservative beliefs, as in the writer who argued for the existence of a personal devil; or as in the debate of the General Association in 1870 as to whether a guest minister should be assigned to preach in the Universalist Church of the city. The decision was that it should be done because "Universalists are sinners and need the Gospel." But such arguments are very scarce in the succeeding decades. There is every reason to believe that most Illinois Congregationalists concurred in the action of the National Council which in 1871 chose language that ignored distinctions between Calvinists and Arminians, and

which in 1892 resolved that "affiliation with our denomination of churches not on our roll, should be welcomed upon the basis of common evangelical faith, substantial Congregational polity and free communion of Christians, without regard to forms or minor differences."

The dissemination of Darwin's evolutionary hypothesis, and of Spencer's "social science," and the increased study of "higher criticism," provoked much discussion and some controversy. On the whole the contemporary documents impress one with the absence among Congregationalists of anything like the bitter hostility to these intellectual forces found in other bodies. Of course it is true that for some time there is rather a suspicious interest than a plain acceptance of them. As early as 1868 the editor of the denominational organ for this region admitted the persuasiveness of the geological argument for the antiquity of man, and stated that Biblical scholars might have to revise their interpretation of what the Scriptures said—revisions which four years later he openly defended. The admirable temper of the denomination on such matters is evinced in a report dealing with the Chicago Theological Seminary adopted by the General Association in 1883:

The signs of the times indicate that the brunt of the criticism for some time to come will fall more and more on the Old Testament. Is the story of Eden a myth? Is the name Genesis a misnomer? Have we here a condensed but phenomenally correct account of the origin of the world, or is it a collection of fables edited by some unknown person? Have we in the Old Testament the debris of Hebrew literature cast together in unhistorical confusion, or have we an orderly book, written by holy men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, written at various times and by many authors, but one in spirit and purpose from first to last?

These and many other questions are in the air, and the graduates of our Seminaries should be prepared to answer them.

When the President of Wheaton College in 1894 offered a

resolution condemning the methods of "higher criticism" and requesting that its views be kept out of the Chicago Seminary, the General Association tabled the proposal.

The most rigid aspect of Congregationalism during the last half of the nineteenth century was in attitudes toward manners and personal morality—attitudes so striking that in popular parlance the word Puritanism, very unfairly, was whittled to describe them. This was a general characteristic of all English speaking peoples during these years, and not confined in any way to Congregationalists, though they did claim to be the particular heirs of the Puritan tradition. The stark strength of this strain in that denomination was revealed in the blazing warning (as many chose to interpret it) of the Chicago fire. In a sermon excited by that catastrophe, the Rev. E. P. Goodwin of the Chicago First Church declared:

No more parties, and balls, and operas, and trousseaus ordered from Paris, and all that. No more wines on a side-board, and dinner courses like a table d'hôte. Now is the time for the old fashioned simplicity on which our mothers brought us up. Let the daughters tend the door-bell, and help about the sewing, and put their hands in the flour, and when the bell rings be not ashamed to have it said that they are busy in the kitchen. . . . Let the jewelry be stripped off, and go to pay debts, and help these crippled tradesmen to the daily bread some of them find so scarce. Let there be especially a rectifying of extravagance in dress. . . . Calico never dishonored your mother, and it will not you. . . . You have been bowed and hooped, and deformed, and distorted by fashion long enough.

Prudery had formed no part of Puritanism in the virile, realistic years of its beginning, but did become inextricably confused with it during this era. "Victorian" some have called it, though at one time we had our own native adjective for it: "Comstockery." Anthony Comstock's notions of immorality in books, magazines, and art were soundly approved by Illinois Congregationalists, and his priggish activities applauded.

Though his direct assaults upon particular improprieties were largely confined to the East, at least one Illinois church, the Plymouth of Chicago, had the opportunity of hearing the great prude in person. In any event the influence of which he was the symbol was very extensive, and there are times when one finds the numerous patent medicine advertisements (with their anatomical references) the most human part of the reading in *The Advance*.

Surely if this Neo-Puritanism had not been sincere, it could hardly have persisted in an increasingly uncongenial environment. For the weeds of continental Europe grew larger and wilder around this Yankee garden, and the thoroughfares of modern industry could not be denied their right of way. Germans and Bohemians had their own habits of recreation and Sabbath observance, while railroads, factories, and skyscrapers had their own patterns of profit which even the pious might not refuse. Sometimes these contrary notions were quite sophisticated, as in the five times elected mayor of Chicago whose youthful travels in Europe had given him ideas about the individuality of personal morality, as well as misgivings about the feasibility of legislating on such matters. But more often the hostility was more brusquely expressed as when a Chicago jury refused to convict a man brought to trial for keeping a saloon open on Sunday, and one of the jurors commented: "We're not going to stand in with them fanatics anyway." Even the pride of Illinois Congregationalists in the Columbian Exposition of 1893 was cloyed by the fact that the grounds of the great fair were open on Sundays and that liquor was sold upon them. Against its fleshpots were proffered the best efforts of Moody and Sankey, yet after it was over the decision was that the Columbian Exposition "had necessarily a great depressing effect upon the spiritual life of many of our churches."

An adequate account of Sabbatarianism, Comstockery,

Temperance, Prohibition, and similar movements would of necessity be part of a well rounded history of American religions, and cannot be confined to the chronicle of one denomination. Nevertheless, attention to some of the features of these activities as manifest among Congregationalists is essential to an appreciation of their place in Illinois culture. Furthermore, the moral issues made over these points were involved with the economic problems and political controversies of the time. There were, for example, those who argued that the railroad labor troubles (the most dramatic of the period) derived from the moral corruption of the railroad workers by Sabbath toil and traffic, against which the denomination had consistently protested. The same blending of economic and moral issues is exposed in the support given during the middle eighties to a movement for the Saturday half-holiday. This, it was stated, had many of the advantages of the eight-hour day wanted by labor unions, and none of the disadvantages. Furthermore, it would help keep Sunday for the churches by lessening the competition from bicycling, baseball, and other sports. Such arguments give one the impression that the ecclesiastical institution is struggling for a vested interest of its own. This is even more evident in such actions as the condemnation heaped upon the Rock Island Railroad in 1869 when the completion of the first continental railroad, to which it was connected, increased the Sabbath traffic. If the economic controversy turned to the new doctrines of Socialism then it was often pointed out that the foreigners accused of fostering it were those same infidels who disturbed the Lord's Day with their beer gardens, turner ceremonies, and other desecrations.

Many activities were regarded as undesirable on any day. Such were: horse-racing, lotteries, playing the market, and other forms of gambling; carnivals with their "fat women shows and brass jewelry swindlers"; or "ball matches," such as those occurring at "White Stocking Park." The feeling against the

theatre lingered, but relented somewhat. At the beginning of the period, even "opera-goers" were condemned, and it was still a boasted mark of progress that Shakespeare could be quoted in a sermon, for the "church and the ministry . . . have learned to distinguish dramatic poetry from the theatre." Before long it was admitted further that the hostility was not to the theatre itself, but to its associations, to its "late hours, profane language, indelicate costumes, and allusions, actors and actresses of loose principles and audiences that include even the wildest characters." By 1880 there were coming to be some church theatricals, though there were still misgivings lest even dramatic representation of Biblical scenes do more harm than good by developing among the young the "theatre habit."

Overshadowing all similar issues was liquor. This, more than others, was propelled into civil politics as slavery had been before the Civil War. The agitation turned about such matters as high license fees, local option laws, prohibition by the state legislature, and demands for "scientific" instruction (or propaganda) in the schools concerning the effect of alcoholic drinks on human bodies. However, the prohibition cause never dominated Congregational churches in the way slavery had once done. During this period, drinking was not always uniformly a rigid test for church membership or associational fellowship. One of the most influential and socially minded clergymen of the day, Washington Gladden, wrote against making total abstinence part of the church covenant.

Associated in the public mind with opposition to intoxicants was aversion to the use of tobacco. Much was made of the allegedly deleterious effects of its use, General Grant's death being useful for this purpose. But while the Illinois associations pronounced against it and good church members generally disapproved of the nicotine "habit," it would seem from the condemnatory resolutions themselves that there was never

a time when a few of the Congregational clergy in Illinois did not enjoy tobacco in some form.

Most, though not all, of these sumptuary rules of the denomination are now primarily of antiquarian interest. Some of them are obsolete taboos, others now only faintly remembered fears, such as those which caused the denomination to pour money and effort into a New West Education Commission. This body was organized in 1879 in order to save the Far West from those "insidious" foes of the "gospel and free institutions," the Mormons of Utah and the Jesuits of New Mexico. One of its founders and its president almost to the end of the century was the Rev. Frederick A. Noble whose outstanding position in Illinois Congregationalism is attested by his having been for a time editor of *The Advance* and president of the American Missionary Association. It was during his long pastorate at the Union Park Church that it became the largest Congregational church in the state.

One "alarm" was already fading in that time. This was the opposition to secret societies, notably Masons, against which the denomination in 1865 still had taken a strong stand. Only the stormy insistence of President Blanchard of Wheaton College seems to have kept it from an earlier obsolescence. By the end of the century it was stifling from indifference.

There were then also deeper questions of racial and social injustice, some of them old, some new, which are as problematical now as they ever were. In order to appreciate these in their contemporary setting it is needful to survey the history of the Congregational population in Illinois.

At the close of the Civil War there were about 15,000 Congregationalists in Illinois. By the end of the century they numbered almost 50,000. The 234.5% increase was slightly in excess of the growth of the entire state, which was 181.6% between 1860 and 1900. Decade by decade the curve of growth

for the denomination was about the same as for the general population. The somewhat greater proportionate increase of Congregationalists may be explained by the fact that it was concentrated in the more urban northeastern counties where the growth of the state was most rapid. During the twenty years following 1865, the denominational membership enlarged about three thousand each five years. Then about 1885 the rate of expansion became about twice as rapid, adding on the average 6000 new communicants each five years. The total membership, which had not doubled until 1888, had tripled by 1895.

As suggested above, the special factor in the growth of the denomination was its relation to the development of the urban area about Chicago. The Chicago Association was in 1865 still inferior in numbers to the Central West and Fox River associations, but passed them into first place by 1869, a position which it kept thereafter by an ever wider margin. By 1890 it came to contain more than one-third of the membership and included almost one-half of the church property values. While this phenomenal local growth is the salient fact in the denominational statistics, it should not distract from the moderate but steady rate of increase elsewhere. The Central West Association, for example, remained consistently the second largest in the state.

The same kind of development is revealed by lists of the ten leading churches made every five years. At first only two Chicago churches were on the list, but after 1875 about half of them were located in that city. Of these, the Chicago First was generally the largest, but in the middle nineties was exceeded by the Union Park Church. Briefly, during the height of the Moody revival of the early seventies, the largest had been the Tabernacle Church. Outside of Chicago, the Galesburg First Church and the Rockford Second were always among the ten largest churches. Geneseo was one of them

until it fell out of the list after 1880; while Peoria and Elgin came on the list permanently after 1875.

The growth of Congregationalists in the Chicago area was no doubt facilitated by the character of the native migration into this metropolis. That migration came particularly from those parts of the United States where the New England element was strong. In 1870, New York and Massachusetts led all the other states as the birthplace of Chicago inhabitants. Of the neighboring states, Indiana lagged behind Michigan and Wisconsin which had been the more "Puritan" in their settlement. The other leading states so far as nativity of Chicagoans was concerned were, it is significant, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Connecticut.

Next to the dynamic condition in the Chicago area the most striking feature of the denominational statistics was their static character in the southern one-third of the state. Though some of the very earliest Congregational churches, such as Jacksonville, had been located in the middle latitudes of the state, Congregationalism hardly touched "little Egypt" until the construction of the Illinois Central and Baltimore and Ohio railroads in the area. The Illinois Central was particularly successful in selling parcels of its land-grant to Yankee settlers, both as individuals and as colonies. Two of these colonies were Hoyleton and Rosemond. The intrusion of this new population element among the older Hoosier and Kentuckian settlers made possible the formation of Congregational churches. For as a general rule the establishment of Congregational institutions everywhere waited upon the appearance of New England migrants, or upon second-hand Yankees from New York or Ohio. It was in accordance with this tendency that the Central West Association was the strongest at the time of the Civil War, for Yankee settlement, particularly of the colony type, had been very substantial in the Military Tract. The belated appearance of the same kind of settlers in at

least small numbers now made possible the foundation, on the eve of the Civil War, of the Southern Association. The boundary of this body lay far enough north to include Beardstown, Jacksonville, and Springfield.

Though the Southern Association included about one-third of the state (forty-seven counties) it remained numerically small. In 1865 it comprised twenty-three ministers, only twelve of whom actually served one or more of its sixteen churches. Twenty years later it still contained only twenty-seven churches, four of which were vacant. The geographical spread of its sparse membership made the Association unwieldy, for its most southern church was 275 miles distant from its most northern, and its eastern 170 miles in a southeasterly direction from its most western. In 1879, the Association decided to hold its fall meeting in two sections: section A to contain all those along the C.C.C. and St. Louis Railroad and to the southward; section B all those farther to the north. This awkward division was abandoned in 1882, but four years later the Association was permanently divided. Nineteen of the more northern churches formed the new Springfield Association. This included some of the oldest churches in the state, notably Jacksonville, but was itself not very strong, for the year after its formation it reported that only twelve churches were in "efficient working order," and one-third of them were without pastors.

The persistent feebleness of the denomination in the southern part of the state may be illustrated by the case of Sandoval which did not become self-supporting until 1894, thirty years after it was founded! At that time among its sister congregations in the Southern Association five important pastorates were unsupplied, five ministers served two or three churches each, and there was a total of only ten pastors and one evangelist to work among twenty-five churches.

Throughout the years covered in this chapter, the rest

of the state persistently expressed concern over the failure of the denomination to do more than falter and fade among the people of Egypt. Some critics pointed to flaws in the missionary machinery of Congregationalism. In the late sixties it was charged that the American Home Missionary Society acted as a church-aid society rather than as a missionary agency, its work consisting mainly in supporting pastors in weak congregations. It was complained that the expansion of the denomination depended too much on the arrival of settlers from the north and eastern parts of the United States. As a consequence, the Society did not maintain missionaries in the field who were free of pastoral charges and therefore able to labor among persons or communities unattached to any religious organization. If churches were weak, it was suggested, they should more often be yoked in pairs, be served by one minister, and not require aid from the Society. If this were done, more funds and effort could be used in sustaining "missionaries at large," in exploring, and in forming new churches.

One of the reasons for urging financial independence from New England and New York was that Illinois would then be free to employ policies more suited to its own condition. After the General Association formed itself into the Home Missionary Society for Illinois in 1871, and got greater autonomy, in 1878, in its own missionary affairs, some changes were made. The mission work was put under the direction of two superintendents for a northern and a southern district. The latter included the Central, Central West, Quincy, and Southern associations, comprising about a third of the churches, but three-fourths of the area of the state. The other eight associations made up the northern district. Substantial improvement in missionary work was soon reported. The missionary committees of the associations co-operated more effectively, appropriations were made more conscientiously and carefully, the missionary pastors (of which there were

between forty and fifty in the seventies) showed increased fidelity in their work. The superintendents did good work exploring, organizing, investigating, and promoting church building. Several other suggested changes were implemented at various times. During the seventies particular emphasis was put on the pairing of weak churches in order to make them self-sustaining. By 1875 this had been done to fifty-nine, ten of which were yoked to Presbyterian churches. During the eighties two general missionaries, not attached to any specific congregations, were put into the Illinois field. These put their energies into reanimating churches that were almost extinct, or encouraging those that were weak and discouraged. Later, in the nineties, this developed into the use of special evangelists, of which there at one time were four. In the south, at least, these specialists resorted to the technique of the "gospel tent."

There were those who questioned the desirability of using these evangelists. Whatever success they had elsewhere, certainly by the end of the century there was good cause to ponder on the years of special labor that had been spent upon Egypt. In 1900 there were still only twenty-six churches dividing among them a mere 2000 members throughout thirty-four counties. The ephemeral character of the mission work is indicated by the fact that when the Association was forty years old (in 1892), twenty-one of its churches were less than seven years old, and eight were less than three years old. Another illustration of the same fact is that in 1900 none of the ministers had been stationed in their charges prior to 1898.

For the very obvious failure of Congregational missions here many blamed the environment. The natives differed temperamentally from the Congregationalists, whom they disliked as Puritans or Yankees, and habitually opposed as pro-Lincoln Republicans. The hostile citizenry closed to Congre-

gational preachers the school-houses which were ordinarily the first buildings used for religious meetings. There was prejudice against an educated clergyman, and some disapproval of a paid one. The life of many of the communities was not far above the log cabin stage, and parsonages were few.³ Good men who took churches here soon moved out to better parishes; or if they stayed and made their congregations self-supporting, they might regret their success, for with the end of their missionary status, periodicals and magazines were no longer sent gratuitously, boxes of clothing stopped coming, and their salaries, now entirely local in origin, came less promptly than they had from the mission society office.

One of the explanations given for the imperviousness of Egypt was that Congregationalism appeared along the railroads, and that railroads were slow in extending their mileage in the southern part of the state. Though this can hardly serve as an unqualified explanation, it is an excellent observation, for railroads did affect the geographical pattern of the denomination. This is borne out by the division of the Fox River Union in 1867. The Aurora Association, which resulted from the reorganization, consisted mainly of those churches along the line of the C. B. & Q. Railroad, though the location of the Rock Island also was a factor. A committee of the state Association at that time suggested that the Bureau and Geneseo associations also change their boundaries to conform to these two railways; and in 1869 the Geneseo and Northwestern associations united to form the Rock River Association.

The importance of the railroads is also reflected in the ministerial eagerness for railroad fare reductions. In 1867 a Committee on Railroads frankly reported to the General Association that it could not obtain fare reductions. But the next year it was possible to vote thanks to railway officials for that concession. Such thank-you resolutions became a regular feature of associational business for many years there-

after, the C. B. & Q. and Rock Island sometimes receiving special commendation. The indifference to this matter of the railroads east of Chicago was in 1870 specially condemned. Three years later, sixteen roads were thanked by name for the special treatment they gave to the missionary superintendents in the state. Thus the railroads had their good points, even though they were notorious Sabbath breakers, and it was noted that when a railroad came into a quiet, sober town, so did liquor licenses.

Such adjustments symbolized the impact of the industrial revolution upon Congregationalism. The railroad was only the first and most obvious. In the northern part of the state, problems of church extension were no longer complicated so much by the rude hindrances found in the rural southern half of the state, as by the raw perplexities of the new urban life that was forming so rapidly.

It cannot be said that the denomination perceived these new problems without a well-formed point of view. It was decidedly Republican. Anyone familiar with the maps charting election returns will, of course, expect to find that Congregationalism, which was weak in Egypt but strong in the northern counties, was Republican by inclination. But one is astonished at the strength (yes, even the vehemence) of Republicanism in the denomination. There was in those days no equivalent of the Gallup poll with which to gauge the variations of public opinion, but it is safe to affirm that Illinois Congregationalism went into the era of Reconstruction as a supporter of the most radical wing of the Republican party. In the columns of *The Advance*, President Johnson was called a "criminal," and the Republican senators who did not vote for his impeachment were condemned as "renegades." Efforts to raise money for Washington College were denounced because General Lee was connected with the school; and as late as 1876 the editor opposed amnesty to Jefferson Davis.

The platform of 1868 on which Grant was elected President received hearty assent.

The corruptions of Grant's first administration and his indiscreet relations with "bad" Republican leaders brought on warnings from Illinois that the anti-slavery veterans of the Congregational membership might join a third party, particularly over the issue of the civil service reform. Yet, when the Liberal Republicans did withdraw and were joined by the Democrats in supporting Greeley for President, *The Advance* refused its endorsement. The editor, in fact, predicted early in the Fall that nine-tenths of his subscribers would vote again for Grant. In 1876 Congregational sentiment was also very evidently pro-Hayes and anti-Tilden, the former being delineated as a Christian gentleman who maintained a "family altar." When the Prohibition Party proposed a presidential ticket that year, *The Advance* disapproved on the ground that it would injure Hayes' chances. Again in 1880 the campaign for Garfield was assisted against the Democratic General Hancock, by picturing the latter as one with a "gross and sensual face," and a "flabby sensual double chin, which hangs down and rests over his smashed down shirt collar." He was further portrayed as a "great eater and liberal drinker" who "takes wine at every meal, and whiskey when he feels like it," and as one addicted to the "army habit" of "excessive profanity." Though the bitterness of this partisanship was mitigated somewhat, at least in national politics, during the later years, still at the very end of the century the General Association formally committed itself by expressing "implicit confidence" in McKinley, and thanking him for the "unswerving fidelity with which he has held our country to its lofty moral and philanthropic aims."

This party bias must not be ascribed to ordinary influences merely, such as habit, the waving of the "bloody shirt," or the uncongeniality of the Democratic party to Puritan Protestants.

Nor may it be explained only by the identification of the Republican Party with the "big business" developing in those parts of the Middle West where Congregationalism thrived best. The Republican was also the party committed to the principle of just treatment of the colored races, and to that principle Congregationalists were outspokenly loyal. For example, after the election of Garfield, *The Advance*, in placing four main issues before the President-elect, gave first and second places to the rights of Negroes and to fair dealing with the Indians.

Congregationalists were inclined to regard the post-bellum South as a vast missionary field in which the churches of New England quality, previously kept north of the Ohio River, had a great evangelical responsibility. The American Missionary Association, which did extensive work among the freedmen, became one of the most successful claimants on Congregational philanthropy. This resulted especially in the establishment of Southern schools, tangible proof of which appeared in the visits of the Fisk Jubilee singers and like performers before association meetings and church gatherings. These appeared already in the seventies.

Violation of Negroes' civil rights remained a subject for frequent protest by Congregational assemblies in Illinois. Of this injustice in the North as well as in the South the General Association had an exciting demonstration in 1874. It centered about the Rev. Barnabas Root, a graduate of Knox College and of the Chicago Seminary who was under appointment from the American Missionary Association to return to Africa, where his grand-uncle was a native king. While traveling on the railroad down to Kewanee, where the Association was to meet, he and other members of that body went to eat the noon meal at a "dining saloon" in Mendota. The keeper "refused, with rudeness and profanity, to allow Mr. Root to dine unless he would separate from his friends and

sit at a special table provided for the Negro porters of the Pulman [sic] sleeping cars." Furthermore, he "persevered in this refusal, after learning from the ministers with him who Root was, and with whom he was associated." The very first business of the Association, after the opening sermon that evening, was the unanimous adoption of resolutions describing and condemning what had happened. The railroads involved were rebuked. The Illinois Central, which proved to be responsible, formally expressed its regret, and exhibited in the minutes of the Association a letter of disapprobation to the employee at fault. The affair reads as if it might have happened only yesterday.

The Barnabas Root incident must have helped to stimulate the remarkable resurgence of gifts to the American Missionary Association which occurred the following year. That agency was at the close of the Civil War the third ranking benevolence among Congregationalists of the state, a position which it normally held to the end of the century. But during the late sixties, those first impassioned years of Reconstruction, it led foreign missions and all other benevolences in attracting contributions. Its income declined along with these others during the Panic of 1873, but the year after the Root incident it climbed steeply to compete for the first place again with the American Board. The retirement of the A.M.A. to its more usual third place coincided almost exactly with the removal of Federal troops from the South and the consequent establishment of Democratic ascendancy. During the last quarter of the century, normal annual receipts of the A.M.A. from Illinois were between six and nine thousand dollars. An Illinois contribution of another kind was the years of service of the Rev. Joseph E. Roy as the field superintendent of the A.M.A. in the South, and later as its district secretary in Chicago.

The A.M.A. also labored among the Chinese immigrants

in California. Beginning in the mid-seventies, the Congregationalists in Illinois were increasingly exercised by the mistreatment accorded to the "respectable, industrious," Chinese by the "ignorant, brutal, vile offscouring" of whites. As the prejudice of the latter began in the eighties to affect Congress, the denomination set itself against legal discriminations toward Orientals. In 1892 the General Association formally went on record, condemning as unchristian, unjust, and unworthy the recently enacted Chinese Exclusion Acts.

Still another racial element was the concern of the A.M.A. with the American Indian. Illinois Congregationalists showed an increasing interest in the cause of these natives, now reduced to a troublesome minority. The editor of *The Advance*, to cite a specific instance, put himself in an awkward spot by roundly condemning, well ahead of time, the military campaign on which Custer made his glorified "last stand." Outspoken approval was given to the reforms of the Indian policy which began to appear in the Grant administrations. The abandonment of the tribal system and the inauguration of individual allotments met full approval in Illinois Congregationalism. That more recent appraisals of our Indian policies question the wisdom of these particular reforms does not detract from the very good intentions with which they were made. It was then the sincere expectation, as the General Association expressed it, that the Indians would be prepared for their full share of American nationhood.

The same persons who led the agitation for just treatment of the racial minorities were often also the ones most liberal on the question of women's rights. The very beginnings of feminism in the United States had been inextricably connected with the anti-slavery and temperance causes before the Civil War. At the time that equal rights for Negroes were written into the national constitution there also came to a head the demand for equal rights of women. Since they had been so

deeply involved with the left wing of the reform movements of the middle of the century, it is to be expected that Illinois Congregationalists were greatly agitated by this demand. Opinions then and for years afterwards were very much divided. Though the editor of *The Advance* was for women's suffrage in 1867, many of his correspondents were opposed, and the editor of 1872 agreed with the last opinion.

The denomination had its own phase of the controversy. Whether women should participate in the church government was a subject of discussion before the General Association the very spring that the Civil War ended. In the years following, long articles were written on the suffrage of women in church affairs, though it was already the probable usage, according to one excellent source, to let women vote, even though they did not hold church offices. The ecclesiastical aspect of this issue apparently received its fullest airing in 1876 when there occurred a warm discussion of the women's rights movement at the meeting of the General Association. Most of the leaders of that assembly seem to have been anti-feminine. Professor Franklin W. Fisk of the Chicago Seminary threw his weighty influence against the ladies by arguing against preaching by women. It developed, however, that there was a lot of support for women speaking in church. In their favor came the opinion of the highly respected Rev. Flavel Bascom, one of the revered pioneers of the denomination in this state. An article expressing his views, published soon after the discussion, is especially useful in revealing the nature of some of the opposition to women. Particularly pertinent was his comment that if the Pauline authority were followed literally, then in our church assemblies we ought also to salute all brethren with a kiss, and close the exercise by washing their feet.

Under the Congregational polity there could, of course be no general legislation on the subject. The actual improve-

ment of the role of women in the denomination is, however, attested by the growth of women's religious organizations. The aggrandizement of women's authority through these bodies was not missed by their male observers, who had as a matter of fact expressed resentment during the flare-up of 1876 over the alleged use of the Women's Board of Missions of the Interior to further the cause of feminism. Nevertheless, the next year a Northern Illinois Branch of that body was formed. And in 1885 a Women's Missionary Society for the state went into operation under the very eyes of the General Association and with its express approval. Though some doubted the wisdom of it, the importance of women in the temperance movement was freely recognized. By the nineties, little more than the irradicable male suspicion of female inferiority remained to hamper the growing activities of women in urban settlement work.

None of the foregoing "isms" ever threatened to become for the post-bellum years what slavery had been—the one imperative theme of social ethics. Abolitionism had, to most non-members, characterized Congregationalism during the second third of the nineteenth century, but during the last third the denomination in Illinois was preoccupied not so much with one but with several major social problems. Contributing both to the intensity and extent of these was the tide of immigration from Europe. While this was apparent everywhere in the state it was most evident in the Chicago area. Here to the remaining rawness of the frontier and to the renewing crudeness of the spreading city there were added the bewildering novelties of Old Europe.

Sometimes there was less appreciation of and sympathy for these alien whites than for the Negroes, Indians, and Chinese. An illustration is the comment of a leading Chicago Congregationalist in 1880 that the United States should turn from the "imaginary evils of an Asiatic immigration to the real

threatenings of the communistic European element," citing as proof the report that "another ship-load of Socialists has left Hamburg for America." That Germans should irritate a Chicagoan more than a Chinese at that date is not merely the result of the latter's numerical unimportance except on the Pacific Coast. It is a frequently noted quirk of human nature that the peculiarities of those most like us are often harder to tolerate than the more profound dissimilarities of those who are very different from us.

That many Congregationalists understood that the differences were deeply rooted in divergent cultural origins did not necessarily mitigate the mutual dislike. The manners, recreations, and social attitudes of the German minority were none the less regarded as "offensive to the Christian community, . . . at war with all the usages of American society," and admittedly viewed with "unconcealed aversion and dread" as hostile to religion and good morals. The very attributes which set the Germans apart served to prove that they needed to be converted to those Anglo-Saxon attitudes of which Congregationalists were prone to regard themselves as singular guardians. How the irritations rising from such social prejudices might distort an outlook on social problems is revealed in the confession of a Congregational publicist in Chicago that he found it hard to sympathize with the Home Rule movement in Ireland because of his strong feeling against the Irish here, with their Romanism, whiskey drinking, unthrift, superstition, ignorance, and general improvidence. He declared, "Let the people of that beautiful island stop drinking and there would presently be plenty to eat."

Given these psychological factors, it is not strange that while Congregationalists were early persuaded of the imperious need to sustain their way of life against these outsiders, yet evangelical and social work among alien populations often had disappointing results. The lists for 1870 show only four for-

eign language churches in Illinois: a small Welsh church in the Fox River Union, organized in 1852; a Scandinavian church founded in Chicago in 1868; and two German churches in Quincy and its immediate vicinity, organized in 1858 and 1860. The total membership of all four was only 108 persons.

Those figures do not reveal, however, the scope and depth of the influence which, regardless of resulting sectarian labels, had already been exerted upon the foreign population. A German missionary had been commissioned by the American Home Missionary Society as early as 1834, and in 1836 arrangements were made for co-operative missionary efforts with the Evangelical Lutheran Church. During the two decades preceding the Civil War, the A.H.M.S. furnished salary subsidies on the Midwestern frontier to no less than twenty-one members of the *Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchenverein des Westens*, the forerunner of the German Evangelical Synod of the West. Several of the German pastors thus assisted were stationed in Illinois. In stark ecclesiastical statistics this help showed only in the listing of the two German churches mentioned above, the pastor of which after several years of support from the A.H.M.S. changed membership from the *Kirchenverein* to the Quincy Association. How inadequately that measures the true effect of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism upon the Evangelical churches is attested by the conclusion of the scholar who has written the early history of these German churches. It is his judgment that: "There developed among the pietistically tempered pastors of the *Kirchenverein*, especially if they were tutored by the American Home Missionary Society, a strong evangelistic spirit, which, crusading against the frontier evils of immorality, sinful amusements, Sabbath-desecration, and intemperance, at times bordered on the revivalistic."⁴

A similar influence had been exerted upon the Scandinavians. The founder of the Swedish Lutheran Church in America, Lars Paul Esbjorn, upon his arrival in the West in

1850, had received the backing of President Jonathan Blanchard of Knox College at Galesburg, who got his fellow-townsmen in the Yankee colony to give Esbjorn subscriptions for the erection of a Lutheran church for the recent Swedish settlers. Blanchard also helped the Swedish pioneer minister to get a stipend from the A.H.M.S. One of Esbjorn's first recruits, Tuve Nilsson Hasselquist, "the most versatile and the ablest leader in the annals of Swedish-American Lutheranism," came directly from Sweden to Galesburg. During his early years in that community he was also affected by its Puritan character. In fact, his career was ever after marked clearly with the impress of the forceful Blanchard. Here again the best scholarly judgment on the history of the denomination emphasized the permanent significance of this non-European influence: "Nothing could be more unhistorical than to designate the Augustana Synod as the 'daughter' of the church of Sweden. . . . In polity and practice the Augustana Synod has far more in common with Congregationalism and Presbyterianism than it has with European Lutheranism."⁵

Aside from the work of the A.H.M.S., there also came to be the influence among aliens of the growing numbers of branch Sunday Schools, or School Missions, operated by Congregationalists in several cities of the state. The work of these was, of course, not confined to immigrants. This evangelical device, which originated in the decade before the Civil War, continued its development until, during the nineties, there were over a hundred Congregational mission schools in Illinois. The greater number of these had only a temporary existence, but some existed for several years, and a few grew into churches.

It is not until after 1880 that the Congregational name comes to be fixed upon a considerable number of foreign language churches. More intensive mission work in Chicago is signified by the formation, late in 1882, of the Chicago

Missionary Society. Its very first report emphasized the work it was doing among the Germans and Bohemians, to direct which it had called a minister who for ten years had been a missionary of the American Board in Austria. This Chicago society did not confine its attention, by any means, to foreigners, but its work was of a kind greatly to facilitate evangelization of the unassimilated alien population. At the end of five years it had organized eleven churches, helped ten weak ones, and aided in the establishment and maintenance of Industrial Schools and Sunday Schools. The potential scope of extension work done is illustrated by the Swedish services held twice a month under the auspices of the Chicago Avenue Church. They were attended by congregations well exceeding a thousand persons.

The needs of the immigrant population also received special attention about this same time by the Chicago Theological Seminary. In 1882 a German Department was established in charge of Gustave A. Zimmerman, Doctor of Philosophy from Berlin, superintendent of the German department of the Chicago public schools, and editor of a German paper with a circulation of 12,000. This new department of the Seminary was to train ministers to preach to Germans in their own tongue. The supply of such men was difficult to maintain. As the A.H.M.S. superintendent of German work observed, labors such as his were greatly handicapped by lack of preachers who were German in sympathy, yet trained in Congregational polity and faith. It was, he affirmed, useless to plant German churches unless the right men could be found to fill their pulpits, yet Germans who entered the ministry after an adequate collegiate education were likely to be so Americanized as to prefer pulpits in American rather than in German churches.

German was only one of the fields in which the Seminary now began to provide special preparation. By 1886 the fourteen nationalities and peoples represented in its student body

were receiving instruction in six languages. Twenty-five of the seminarians were in the "foreign departments." Next to the German the most notable of these was the Scandinavian department begun in 1885.

The Chicago Theological Seminary invited to its Swedish department the theological students of the Swedish Mission Covenant, a denomination comprising the extreme Puritans among the Swedes. They preferred a freer and looser form of church government than that of the Augustana Synod, and also objected to the formalism of the churches adhering to that ecclesiastical body. The activity resulting in the schism of the Mission Covenant had centered during the seventies about Galesburg; and at Knoxville, five miles away, had been established their only seminary. Its closing in 1884 made the offer of the Congregational Seminary in Chicago very opportune. One of the leaders of the Mission Covenant was sent to Sweden at Congregational expense to select a man to give instruction in this Swedish department. At least one other member of this Swedish denomination was also in that department, and two others were appointed to the Seminary Board. It was not until 1891 that the Mission Covenant had a seminary under its own control. This educational co-operation between the two denominations was expressive of an ecclesiastical affinity which for a time promised to bring about some kind of union. This did not, however, shape so well in this region as in the East where several Swedish Congregational churches resulted from the mutual attraction of the two denominations.

There is no space further to detail the mission work among foreigners which quickened during the eighties, to sketch the lives of missionaries working among the Belgians and Italians, or the mission Sunday schools among the Poles, or the Bible readers and the colporteurs visiting from house to house among the Bohemians, selling tracts and Bibles, and conversing and praying with the people. And as has already been emphasized,

no denominational statistics can measure the hidden effects of such activities upon the alien strangers. It may be useful, nonetheless, to enumerate the foreign language churches listed for the last year of the century. There were then eight Scandinavian (mostly Swedish) churches; two in Chicago, and the others in Kewanee, Princeton, Hinsdale, DeKalb, Joliet, and Lemont. There was one Welsh and one Bohemian church, both in Chicago. And the most striking of all was the existence of an entire association, called the German Conference, which had been formed in 1892. By 1900 it included seven churches. Besides the four in Chicago, it included one each in Naperville, Park Ridge, and Waukegan. Furthermore, there were two more German churches not affiliated with this youngest of the Illinois associations: one in Chicago and another in Peoria.

Thus Congregationalism came to exist among the foreign population of the Commonwealth. But it can never be said that to any great degree it came to be a part of it, for the denomination was as a whole distinctly not proletarian but bourgeois in its composition and outlook. For instance, at the beginning of the last quarter of the century, most of the Chicago churches were noticeably located in the "better" parts of the city. On economic matters, the primary emphasis of the denomination was on the old personal virtues of honesty, sobriety, and thrift, and it is not until the nineties that one observes any considerable awareness of the novel ethical problems created by the new urban and industrial civilization.

Congregationalism, like all other well established makers of moral opinions, was distracted by the exciting and overwhelming material progress of the age. It was typical that the state Association meetings of 1871 and 1873 allowed time in their sessions for visits to the Moline Plow Works and the Elgin Watch factory. The creator of the first of these, John Deere, was one of the most esteemed communicants of the denomination, and his demise in 1886 was given unusual at-

tention, with fitting note of his philanthropy to Congregational institutions. Pride in the denomination with the rising commercial powers was frequently expressed. It was even remarked of the new economic enterprise that "in our churches we need the quick and strenuous spirit of man's latest life, that our successes and our benefactions may correspond with our environments."

Not so much the manner of creating the new wealth as the mode of spending it was at first the chief concern of Congregationalists. "What I Would Do with a Million Dollars" was the theme on which the Rev. Frank Wakely Gunsaulus preached to his Plymouth Church congregation, among them Philip D. Armour, worth fifty such millions, and master of as many employees as there had been Congregationalists in all Illinois in 1865. Not always was the philanthropic response as quick or fulsome as from this man, who by doubling an endowment made by his brother became the founder of the Armour Mission, an unsectarian Sunday School attended by nearly 2000. To this institution were appended a free kindergarten and a dispensary, the whole enterprise enjoying the income from the Armour Flats adjoining the mission. The Flats comprised 217 apartments designed to give decent living quarters to workers' families at reasonable rates. And finally, to Gunsaulus' particular challenge, Mr. Armour responded by opening the Armour Institute in 1893, of which the Congregational pastor was a co-creator and the first president.

The weaving of such golden threads into the fabric of the denomination affected the resulting pattern. A man such as Armour might be kindly (though likely in a patriarchal kind of way), and often unselfish, but he was unavoidably tarred with the stick which he was wielding in the rather ruthless business contest. It was all well and good for Congregationalists to describe speculation on the Board of Trade as gambling,

but no one ever pushed the excommunication of the prominent figures in many a speculative conflict.

Only slowly came some sense of the power for evil latent in the new economic order. Congregational clergymen in Illinois cannot be easily identified in the very van of those demanding an application of Christian ethics to business enterprises. In the larger neighborhood of the Middle West there was, however, the social prophecy of Washington Gladden, who was frequently given a hearing in Illinois pulpits and papers. The region comprised such apostles of the social gospel as George D. Herron, Josiah Strong, and Charles M. Sheldon. And in 1893 Graham Taylor began his "pioneering on social frontiers" from an outpost in the Chicago Theological Seminary.

Though there are no formal commitments, it is possible to trace a line of developing opinion in the articles and correspondence of the weekly denominational magazine. What simple convictions on economic problems were at first prevalent is betrayed in this extract from an anti-union editorial published in 1867:

We think the Almighty God has placed us all in the positions to which we have been assigned for a wise and good purpose. All cannot be officers, field marshals or generals in the grand army now fighting the battle of life. The bulk of humanity is of course, composed of the rank and file of private citizens, whose duty it is of course, to be contented with their lot in life, to work with uncomplaining industry, to manage, each man for himself, his private affairs.

In the same columns during the seventies labor unions were denounced for their eight-hour day agitation, on the grounds that it meant a waste of capital in unused machinery, and that it was dishonest to ask a day's pay for only eight hours of work. The virtues to be upheld, be it noted, were those of old Puritan standing. Governor Hayes was com-

mended during this decade for his firmness in dealing with the striking coal miners in Ohio.

Within the next ten years there was more willingness to see some merit in the laboring man's complaints. The railroad capitalists were not infrequently scolded for their high and discriminatory rates, and it was occasionally remarked that some kind of government regulation ought to be established. It was now recognized as "a fact as old as history that the rich have always oppressed the poor," and that the poor were now learning to protect themselves. The conflict between capital and labor must be settled "on a Christian basis by the capitalists." As for the rumors about anarchist and socialist organizations in Chicago, the comment was that while there was a small element of truth in them they were exaggerated.

This last was the opinion expressed early in the year of the famous Haymarket Riot. As the contest approached a showdown that year between the Knights of Labor and railroad employers, there was considerable sympathy expressed toward the former. A factor in this attitude was the prominence of the notoriously immoral Jay Gould among the railroad barons, contrasted to the leadership of the Knights of Labor by Terence V. Powderly, whom Congregationalist commentators found personally quite attractive. Helpful to that end were the rules of his labor organization which permitted membership to Negroes but closed it to all sellers of intoxicating drinks. Up until the Haymarket Riot itself the hope was expressed that the Knights of Labor offered a solution to the workingman's troubles, particularly if the organization were kept free of the Socialist influence. The chief blame for the growing labor unrest was laid directly on the capitalists, who were marked as the chief sinners. Their failure to apply the "Golden Rule"—their oppression of the workingmen—was now, so it was expressed, reaping for them the whirlwind.

As it proved, this sympathy for the Knights of Labor

was rather unrealistic, for with it was combined an uncompromising opposition to the use of the strike as a means to achieve the union objectives. The best hope offered to the unions was an off-handed faith in the coming of a new "political economy," whatever that implied. Powderly was sternly advised by his Congregational friends that the great railway strikes of the Spring of 1886 were a "consummate folly" which would "put back, for years, the interests of the laboring classes." With all of the implied appreciation for the wage and hour demands of the union, there had been always the warning that when strikers "assume the form of a mob," they must be put down as "law breakers."

Such parlor liberalism could hardly withstand the popular hysteria that followed the Haymarket Riot. The tragedy was the theme of most sermons in Chicago Congregational pulpits on the Sunday following. The Union Park Church immediately raised \$160 for wounded policemen and for the families of those who had died. The man-hunt which set out to fix the blame for the bombing upon the Socialists and Anarchists was urged on all the more easily since Puritan prejudice confused the alleged bombers with saloon-keepers, atheists, obscene literature, and Sabbath desecration. The arrested anarchists were condemned in advance of trial as "these enemies of righteousness, the opposers of all law." As their conviction came about much too slowly, the fretting editor of *The Advance* called for a serious modification of the jury system. Mayor Harrison was scolded for the toleration which had ever allowed the presence of such scum in the city. The suppression of a German language newspaper in the city was applauded—Congregationalism had lived a long generation since the years when it, as the persecuted sponsor of social reform, had invoked the sacredness of the Bill of Rights. One looks in vain for any prominent Congregational identification at that time with those whose calmer judgment saw in the conviction

of the anarchists that serious miscarriage of justice which later research has revealed it most certainly was. When Altgeld six years later pardoned those not immediately executed, the Congregationalists' organ was with the crowd that bitterly condemned him.

Congregationalism appeared on the very scene of the next great labor-capital crisis. This was the Pullman strike, in many ways the most important incident in American labor history. The locale was the "model town" which George M. Pullman had built for his workers, and over which he had established a rather Puritanical regime. Early in the year of the great strike Congregationalists organized the West Pullman Church, whose members were factory workers of the Pullman Company. Thus the denomination was directly involved. In the controversy which whirled about the great strike that Spring the opinions expressed in *The Advance* swung with the heavy conservative opposition to the American Railway Union. Eugene V. Debs, its leader, was pronounced an "autocrat . . . drunk with the sudden sense of power," and the strike called the "Debs Rebellion." When despite the protests of Governor Altgeld, Federal troops were used to break the strike, President Cleveland was praised and the Governor berated.

Nevertheless, there are indications that Congregational opinions were grasping the essential character of the controversy more completely than in former years. Throughout the strike, and after, Pullman was roundly condemned for his stubborn refusal to heed the real grievances of his striking employees, and for his refusal to submit to arbitration. Furthermore, on what was to be the most lasting consequence of the strike, the novel use of federal court injunctions against striking unions, there was Congregational disapproval from the very beginning. *The Advance* put its finger directly on

the issue by asking "whether courts shall assume to inflict punishment without jury trial."

There is no question that after the middle nineties a very large number of the Congregational ministry in Illinois were deeply and honestly concerned with the ethical implications of the new economic order. The number of articles on the problem, the regularity of special papers read before the associations, testify to the aroused interest. Stinging accusations that the church was anti-labor brought not so much retaliation as worried interrogation. "Political Economy" sermons were delivered not uncommonly from the pulpits. And what is perhaps of most importance, there was an awareness that while the minister ought to speak out on the issues involved, the subject was difficult. Lest he be "shallow," the minister must be informed.

Indicative of the growing concern with social ethics was the calling of Graham Taylor by the Chicago Theological Seminary. He came, as Taylor himself recalled, "to pioneer the first department of instruction in any church institution to be wholly devoted to the social interpretation and application of religion." One of the conditions of his acceptance of the Chicago professorship was that he should have liberty to work among the masses. His resolution to do this was confirmed by the example of Jane Addams, who particularly influenced the Taylor household to reside among the people whom they wanted to serve. The large house which the Taylors rented in the midst of a cosmopolitan industrial population marked the beginnings, in 1894, of that famous social settlement, the Chicago Commons.

Thus eyes were lifting to the more distant and yet unseen horizons of the twentieth century. One observes this in still another rising interest, that in international affairs. Until the last decade of the nineteenth century there is only sporadic interest in such incidents as the Franco-Prussian War, the

Irish Home Rule agitation, and the activities of William Gladstone, for whom there was a remarkably strong admiration. The nineties, on the other hand, are filled with frequent expressions of concern with matters of international import. There was approval, Cleveland notwithstanding, of the annexation of Hawaii, where Congregational missionaries had done so much to establish the American vested interest. There was the expressed desire for American control of the area where the isthmian canal should be built. In 1894 the General Association of Illinois petitioned Congress against the cruel treatment of Armenians by the Turks, and three years later followed up this utterance on the Near Eastern Question by fulsome resolutions on the apathy of the European powers to the humanitarian problems in that part of the world. When the Venezuela boundary dispute with Great Britain was at its height in 1896, that same Illinois body joined the Council of Evangelical Free Churches of England not merely in standing for peace but in asking for a treaty which would bind both powers to arbitration of all differences. In accordance with this attitude, the Association in 1899 cabled the International Peace Conference, in session at the Hague, an expression of its support of courts of arbitration. During the Spanish American War, the same ecclesiastical assembly deprecated the necessity for war but rejoiced "in a cause so righteous that it must meet the approval of the Prince of Peace." Regarding the Boxer troubles in China, *The Advance* maintained a restrained policy, refusing to allow sympathy for beleaguered missionaries to shut out consideration of the Chinese side of the international controversy.

Congregationalism was ready for the new century.

CHAPTER VII

HISTORY OF CONGREGATIONAL WOMEN'S SOCIETIES

The history of our church women in Illinois can be completely understood only if set forth against the history of the period and the gradually increasing trend of women to participate in affairs of every sort. At the outset church women were largely pioneer in type, assisting their husbands in every manner, from the founding of homes and rearing of children to the building of schools and churches, the latter being in their minds an essential part of adequate provision for the welfare of family and community in a new land. A good church life was as necessary as a good school life for the young generation and necessary as well for their own happiness. They appear from the beginning to have been quite literally "help-meets" in the church—to use an old-fashioned word. And as words take to themselves significance according to their use, so this word pictures in miniature the activities of church women in those days. They were not so much leaders, as helpers in all sorts of small homely ways. We can easily imagine certain of their tasks, such as sewing yards of carpeting for the church aisles and platform, piecing and quilting "comforts" for sale, buying dishes with the proceeds, and filling those same dishes with baked beans for the church suppers, contributing small sums saved from selling eggs, teaching Sunday-school classes—the sort of fundamental work which women have always done, but of which no printed records have come down to us.

How did the change to larger fields come about? How

did "Women's Work for Women" come into prominence, resulting in the organization of the Women's Board of Missions of the Interior and of the Woman's Board of Home Missions? Why all this tremendous rush into organized activity and the great enthusiasms which resulted in such wide-flung achievements? Much has been written and said about the historical haystack and the beginning of missionary activity in New England, but there was also a new upward surge of missionary interest on the part of women about the middle of the last century which perhaps has never been adequately analyzed or understood. That which occurred in Illinois Congregationalism was but a part of a far wider movement.

Women throughout the churches had been interested in the A.B.C.F.M. and had been supporting both the foreign missionary work and the various home causes in a small way. But their resources, aside from their husbands' pocket-books, were meagre. Why then these beginnings of independent organization; how did they happen to occur at this time; was there any gain from this separated endeavor; why the reabsorption of women's efforts back again into the work of the whole; and what has been the effect following this union in Illinois Congregationalism? These are fundamental questions, well-nigh impossible to answer adequately in a single chapter, but we shall try to give a few of those more obvious facts which may help to make some of the answers clear.

The initial impetus toward a sense of women's responsibility came from a certain Reverend David Abeel about 1830. He became convinced that the slow progress of mission work in China was due in large part to the lack of work among women. By a conservative estimate more than half of the women of the world were held in Oriental seclusion. They were unwelcomed at birth, married in childhood to men they had never seen, and shut away from all possible teaching except that of their husbands or of other women.

He obtained permission to come home and present his appeal for women's work for women, and after organizing in England the "Society for Promoting Female Education in the East," came to New York. In due course of time this movement for women's work reached the Middle West. The first individual society, west of Detroit, was that founded in the First Congregational Church of Rockford, Illinois, in May, 1838, twenty-three years before the Woman's Missionary Society started in New York—a rather surprising fact.

It is difficult in these days to realize how much opposition existed toward any large independent organization of women. Probably it would have been impossible because of this general attitude of mind to have undertaken any common effort earlier than 1860. It was not supposed that women were capable of doing such work outside the home, and even upon the foreign field, especially at Madura, there was much disapproval of this new activity. It was the conscientious conviction of many that it was improper for a woman to offer prayer in public or stand upon a platform and preside in a meeting where men were present. Many were the difficulties which arose later from this firmly-rooted opinion. Gradually, however, the feeling of the officers of the American Board upon this subject was modified, and they became aware of the intense desire for service which was spreading quietly and steadily.

The attitude of the Congregational women of Illinois was only a single illustration of a great awakening throughout American womanhood. For example, the need of greater opportunities for learning was being recognized and doors to higher education were also being opened about this period.

The Civil War had much to do with the breaking up of the crust of public opinion. In the country's hour of desperate need it had welcomed women into the camp hospitals. They had gone to the front with their husbands for such service. They had prepared bandages at home and stepped out from the

routine of home-making to wider interests. Now that the war was over they could not merely lay the greater experiences aside. The Women's Boards were in the lead of this impetus toward women's organizations. They were a part of that opening of the way which resulted in the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Women's Home Missionary organizations, and the large philanthropic and educational work done by women's clubs and by charitable organizations devoted to specific ends which followed in their wake.

It is an impressive fact that this impetus was in its very beginnings Christian and missionary. Moreover, the bigness of the declared aims is awe-inspiring. It seems that women could never have undertaken so herculean a task had it not been for faith in a living and loving Heavenly Father. The pressure of love for Him and belief in His omnipotence broke down all barriers, and even conservative timidity and the force of custom could not hinder it. A wave of spiritual power swept all opposition before it in the Midwest.

The meeting for the organization of the Woman's Board of Missions of the Interior was held on Tuesday, October 27, 1868, in the lecture room of the Second Presbyterian Church, Chicago. Dr. Clark, faithful and gentle saint of the church, gave the address which was reported in full in *Missionary Papers*. He said toward the close of his very vivid account of the four women workers in the field,

The question may be asked, Why not act directly through the American Board? The reply is, that you may be brought into more immediate, closer personal relations to the work, by taking upon yourselves a part, and by entering into correspondence with the missionary ladies in the field. Ladies will write to each other as they will not write to me, do the best I can to win their confidence.

The object of the new Board was "to diffuse information, to call out and sustain a loving, active interest in behalf of our

female missionaries, and to raise funds for the support and constant enlargement of our work. . . . It acts through the American Board. It leaves to us all care of details, as to necessary outfit, passage, location, a suitable home, protection and supervision in the field."

Although the Woman's Board of Missions of the Interior included the missionary work of Congregational women in the twenty-three midwest states, it was, of necessity, centered as to its offices and officers in Chicago. Thus the women of Illinois bore a peculiar relation to it. They were inspired by direct contact with its responsibilities and felt an especial duty toward it because of these official privileges and responsibilities which they faithfully fulfilled.

Let us glance now at the beginning of the Illinois Branch itself. We quote from one of the printed reports:

The foundations of all the Branches of the Interior seem to have been laid in 1871. At that time the Executive Board of the W. B. M. I. appointed committees of ladies to attend meetings of the State Associations of Congregational Churches to confer with the ladies present in regard to its work; especially the organizing of auxiliaries and the circulation of *Life and Light*. Mrs. Tyler, of the Zulu Mission, Mrs. Barnum of Harpoort, and Mrs. Walker of the Gaboon Mission, made addresses at the ladies' missionary meetings in several states.

The Illinois women appear to have conferred in this way at the State Association meeting held in Racine, Wis., in 1873. A beginning of formal organization was made at Quincy, Ill., in 1876. The first regular annual meeting of the Illinois Branch was held in Aurora, on February 21 and 22, 1878.

Evidently the weather was inauspicious, for in the report of 1881 we read, "We had met in the rain at Aurora, we had braved a snowstorm to reach Princeton, a pouring rain and oceans of mud had welcomed us to Springfield, and at Ottawa there was no cessation of the rain, therefore it was voted to

substitute April for February as the time of our annual meeting."

In the beginning, two cents a week was asked of every woman who wished to become a member of the great missionary enterprise. With these penny pledges and with \$4,000 in special gifts received from the slender purses of women scattered here and there, the W.B.M.I. had had the effrontery to face the challenge of the so-called heathen world. Sublime faith! Gifts to this midwest Board rapidly increased, until at the twentieth annual meeting the total yearly income was \$48,973.82. In the Jubilee Year a fund of \$250,000 was completed. The share of the Illinois Branch in this work was a large one. We have the percentages for a few years. In 1924, the Illinois Branch contributed 28% of the entire amount raised by the W.B.M.I.; in 1925, 22%; in 1926, 29%.

In its twenty-fifth year, the Illinois Branch gave \$25,112 to the work. Of this, \$15,327 came from the Chicago Association. In the last year, 1925, \$76,746 was turned over to the W.B.M.I. The details of this sum may be interesting:

For the regular apportionment	\$55,254.10
For the deficit	752.70
Building funds	6,839.93
Kobe College Fund	13,815.03
Special gifts	85.00

The expense fund for administering this branch was \$2,425.64.

Such figures imply some successful technique of work and it might be well at this point to consider some of the methods of carrying on at home which contributed to such success. One of the most obvious was the use of the printed page. In 1879, *The Advance* began to devote a column to women's missionary work, and in this column the progress in the Illinois Branch had its share of space. In January, 1883,

Mission Studies was inaugurated and edited from the rooms in Chicago under the able leadership of Miss Sarah Polluck. A missionary hymnal was compiled by a committee of which Mrs. Lyman Baird and Mrs. G. B. Willcox, the latter the wife of a professor in Chicago Theological Seminary, were conspicuous members. This hymnal was brought out, almost as a surprise, at the Annual Meeting of the Board, held in Chicago, in 1888.

One of Miss Polluck's most valuable contributions through *Mission Studies* was the leadership of the midwest women in a systematic study of foreign fields and mission work. The second number, for example, takes up the history of the early Church from the first century down to 407 A. D., and the reader is referred for further information to such books as Milner's *History of the Early Church*, Curtis' *History of the Roman Empire*, and Newcomb's *Cyclopedia of Missions*. Month after month these studies were carried on—historically, down to the present time; then geographically, covering field after field; then biographically, taking up one great missionary after another.

The local societies of Illinois conducted study classes based upon these outlines and articles. The magazine was read by individual women in their homes. Added to this was the opportunity for Illinois women within reach of Chicago to attend the meeting held in the Loop office of the Board every Friday, there to hear instructive addresses, or to listen to a missionary returning from or going out to the foreign field. From the restricted outlook of the home the women of Illinois emerged to an intelligent world vision. They were among the most internationally-minded women, more intimately in touch with foreign ideas than the club women with their "committees on foreign affairs," and preceding them in far-reaching interests by a considerable step. The value of such a Christian

cosmopolitanism to Illinois Congregationalism cannot be over-estimated.

Let us consider for a moment how these wide-spreading interests overflowed educationally into the younger life of the churches. The young women were organized into groups called "The Daughters of the Covenant," and a little silver key was given to each one who signed the covenant of faith and responsibility. One such organization to our knowledge has come down to this time, "The Daughters of the Covenant" in Pilgrim Church, Oak Park. In 1882 five young women's societies of Chicago called together all the young girls of the Chicago Association to discuss the need of a college building in Marash, Turkey, and to inspire and counsel one another. This proved to be only the first of these meetings to be held annually. The sum needed was divided into shares of \$100 or less and each member of the "Committee on Young Ladies' Work" was assigned four states as her special field. The needed money, \$4,400, was raised, twelve societies having given \$100 each. Then came the "Miraculous Bridge," with its piers resting on Guadalajara, Mexico, on Ponape ("the Morning Star"), the Great Wall of China, and Marash College!

Children of seven or eight were organized as "Mission Bands." The very little children of missionary-minded women became "Coral Workers." Like the polyps, working all at a time, they started their little ways of earning missionary money—raising the pet missionary chicken "which *would* fight," sending a quarter "because five cents was too little, and besides I haven't any five cents," shoveling snow, giving up a little candy—and the "Morning Star for the South Seas" was built. In all this Illinois children had an active share. In their enthusiasm for the Board some mothers made their baby daughters into life members, and one life member was listed even before its "arrival in the world would show whether it was a son or daughter."

Let us now turn another page, to the record of women's work for women here in our own country. It was realized by some of the most devoted women in the state that it would be a sad mistake indeed if Christians were to turn their attention upon lands afar, and leave those near at hand without the help so sorely needed. Many parts of the country and many groups of people were still in the precarious pioneer period. There were the problems of the Indian territories. There were the problems of the colored people so recently released from slavery. These could not be ignored.

Various organizations had arisen to cope with these needs, but while these were sufficient for administrative purposes, it was felt that the women needed a society of their own for promotional ends if they were to help adequately in the raising of money.

After setting up an organization, an appeal was sent out "to the Women of the Congregational Churches of the State," in 1885, as follows:

Greeting, The Lord has laid it upon our hearts to have some distinctive part in the evangelization of our State and Country; and in obedience to the command, "Go work in my vineyard" the Woman's Home Missionary Union of Illinois has been organized. . . . The increased power and efficiency that come from organization has been demonstrated by the success attending women's work for Temperance and other reforms, and Women's Boards of Foreign Missions now found in churches of every name. . . . Women's Work for Home Missions has too long been in the way of boxes, and mere desultory giving. What is needed is a more general diffusion of knowledge concerning our country's needs; the awakening and fostering of intelligent interest in the work of home evangelization, and a large increase of many contributions. It is believed that these results will come vastly nearer accomplishment if we, as women, avail ourselves of the obvious benefits to be derived from systematic effort to advance the cause of Christ in our Home land. It is therefore with faith

in its right to be, and in the wisdom and necessity of such an organization, that the Woman's Home Missionary Union appeals to its constituency—the more than *fifteen thousand* women in the Congregational churches of Illinois.

Dear Sisters, is there no significance in the fact that our membership is to the men as two to one? Does it not open to us great opportunities and therefore great responsibilities?

This partial copy of the appeal shows the drive toward participation in the great endeavor of home missions. It also shows the need which was felt for assertion of "the right to be," based upon the awakened consciousness of the numerical superiority of women, a state of mind characteristic of these early organizations.

Article One of the Constitution runs as follows:

This Society shall be called the Illinois Woman's Home Missionary Union. Its object shall be to promote missionary and evangelical work in all parts of our land; by forming auxiliaries in the churches of the State, and through them collecting money for the various existing societies of the Congregational order.

These societies, as we find them mentioned in the early treasurers' reports, were the Congregational Society for Home Missions, the American Missionary Association, the New West Education Commission, the American Congregational Union, and the Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society.

Mrs. A. E. Arnold of Stillman Valley was made president and Miss M. C. Townsend of Rockford, vice-president. Mrs. J. H. Dixon of Chebanse served as secretary, and Mrs. E. F. Williams of Chicago as treasurer. The first meeting was held in Moline, on May 26, 1886.

This state Union also underwent a very rapid growth. At the close of the first year, fifty-one auxiliaries had been formed and \$1,100 had been contributed; at the end of the second year ninety-one auxiliaries were reported and \$2,854

raised; at the end of the third year, one hundred and thirty-one auxiliaries and \$3,713. The Union also held meetings on the first Tuesday of each month in the Loop at 151 Washington Street.

A special project which aroused much enthusiasm was undertaken in November of the second year, the raising of \$300 toward the education of Božena Salava, a young Bohemian woman, who was preparing herself for work among the Bohemian people of Chicago.

In 1888 Mrs. B. F. Leavitt, one of the able women of Congregational Illinois, became president of the Union. Church women were becoming acutely conscious of the great need among the children in backward districts of the state and one report declares that 500,000 children at that time were without the benefits of church and Sunday-school. From the foreign problem of Chicago itself, and from the rural portions of the state, their interest reached out to work for the Indians on the frontiers, and Miss L. A. Pingree of Oahe, South Dakota, received support from them.

The opening of the new century brought no very marked changes in the conduct of either the Home or Foreign Missionary Boards. Organization was practically complete, but there was continuing and encouraging growth along the lines already laid down. The annual meetings of the Illinois Branch of the W.B.M.I. were outstanding occasions, sometimes hardly inferior in program interest to those of the Board itself.

Mrs. C. H. Case, a member of the Board of Managers of the W.B.M.I. for thirty-six years, had been president of the Branch for sixteen years, from 1881 to 1897. Mrs. George M. Clark, later one of the outstanding presidents of the W.B.M.I., was made president of the Branch in 1901 and served until 1912. She was followed by Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Dupuy (acting vice-president), and Mrs. Tuthill, all serving

short terms. In 1918, Mrs. Geo. M. Vial was elected and served for nine years, when at her death Mrs. Nichols took up the work for the brief remaining period.

At the termination of the Illinois Branch it is interesting to note that twenty-four missionaries were receiving their support from the women of the state, and represented the work of the Gospel in seven different lands: Africa, Bulgaria, China, India, Japan, Mexico, and Turkey. Large sums were also raised by the Branch for the support of Bible women, native teachers, school expenses, property upkeep, scholarships, and so forth.

Let us look backward for a little now at the progress of the Illinois Woman's Home Missionary Union during its concluding years, from 1900 and on to the time of the merger. In 1900 the financial goal set was \$12,000 and this money, aside from a small expense account, was distributed among six organizations: the Illinois Home Missionary Association, the Congregational Church Building Society, the Congregational Education Society, and the Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society.

In 1903 the president, Mrs. Sidney Strong, died on board ship as she was returning from Africa, and Mrs. B. W. Firman was elected president in her place, an office she was to hold for six years. She later became the first president of the National Woman's Home Missionary Federation and Mrs. G. H. Schneider was her secretary. The year 1906 saw three special desires come to fulfillment: the birth of *Homeland Tidings*, the engagement of a General Secretary, Miss Finger, and a removal to 40 Randolph Street where the Union finally "set up housekeeping for itself."

In 1910 Mrs. G. H. Schneider was made president, and in 1913 another move was made, this time to the new Y.M.C.A. building at 19 South La Salle Street, where all the Congregational groups took up their headquarters on the thirteenth

floor, an important step toward fuller co-operation and greater efficiency.

In the same year Miss Annie E. S. Beard became president, an office which she was to hold until 1920, when she was succeeded by Mrs. J. J. Kolnos. The report of the General Secretary given in 1916 indicates the busy days spent in the new office at 19 South La Salle Street. One thousand letters are reported for the year, five hundred study books sold, sixteen thousand Thankoffering and Easter invitations sent out, literature from the six national societies distributed to the amount of five hundred and sixty packages, *Homeland Tidings* sent to six hundred subscribers, and eight hundred conferences held.

Homeland Tidings had been published since 1905 by the Union. This was later incorporated into the Illinois edition of the *American Missionary Magazine*. In 1916 nearly \$1,000 was sent to the building fund for Schauffler Training School, and nearly \$6,000 was raised for a new building at Northfield. In 1917 a prayer calendar was issued. Mrs. Julie Way for some time was the efficient field secretary with the munificent salary of \$1.00 per year.

One of the live activities of the Union was the City Missions Committee, really the forerunner of the Women's Co-operating Committee. Sewing classes were conducted in several places. Work was done at the Bethlehem Bohemian Center, the Bulgarian Church, Courtland Street, the Chinese Union, Firman Church, Lake View Mission, the Vacation Bible School, and Tower Hill summer camps.

The Union took an active interest in the Congregational Training School for Women, providing furnishings for the tables and household linens. "Showers" were held for this purpose and churches out in the state contributed generously to the pantry shelves. Union Theological College was also included in the list of those receiving gifts.

During the years from 1913 to 1925 a growing trend toward co-operation and united effort in promotion, education, and financial approach to the churches had caused the serious consideration of the unification of the Women's Boards of Foreign Missions with the A.B.C.F.M. At eleven of the fifteen meetings of the National Council the discussion of this subject had come up and finally in the Fall of 1925 the Congregational churches through the National Council assembled in Washington D. C. decided upon a merger. It was voted unanimously to unify all agencies, this unification to include (a) the conduct of the foreign mission work in the foreign field, (b) the administration of the work in the departments at home, (c) the appeals to the denomination in behalf of missions, and (d) the foreign missionary education and promotion throughout the denomination.

Because of the large bequests for missionary work to be administered through the W.B.M.I., and because of other gifts included in the wills of persons still living, it was legally necessary that the Women's Board be continued as an incorporated body. The By-Laws of the Articles of Association were amended and adopted on November 4, 1926, providing for the administration of these trust funds by a Board of Trustees and that a meeting of the life members should be called once in five years. The W.B.M.I. has continued to function in this limited way up to the present time, receiving legacies and bequests, investing and administering these funds, and receiving and administering rents from real estate property. Within the last two years it has even accepted a piece of property in Foochow. It still holds trust funds of slightly less than a quarter of a million.

Independent groups derived largely from W.B.M.I. membership have continued to support actively certain pieces of work which had their origin in the work of the Board, conspicuously "The Friends of Kobe College," and the group

of sponsors for the Woman's Department of Anatolia College. The promotional group for Kobe raised \$500,000 for the building of that outstanding woman's college in Japan, a direct outcome of the early school founded by the W.B.M.I., and continues a very active interest, even up to and into the present war period.

Turning back to the Union, we find that Mrs. Wharton Plummer became president in 1924, and served until the time of the merger. As the I.H.M.U. was a state organization, the annual meeting was always held at the time of the Conference and one period was devoted to Women's Work. Thus the final annual meeting was held in the First Union Congregational Church of Quincy, on May 4-6, 1926. The main address was given by Mrs. Franklin Warner on the subject, "The Whole Church in the Whole Work," a title indicative of the trend of thought at this last meeting.

Mrs. P. L. Evans, Secretary, in her report expressed the hope that after the merger the work of the women will be "simple in its machinery, comprehensive in its scope, and much more powerful, because 'In Union there is Strength.'"

Since the merger, an annual meeting of the Union has been held in May to transact such business as is necessary under the articles of incorporation, including the administering of trust funds. Two cottages have been built at Tower Hill for use at summer conferences and for rental, one being named for the last president before the merger, Mrs. Plummer, and one for Miss Cora E. Barnard, the devoted office secretary and treasurer. A guest house has been erected at Merom and generous contributions have been made toward its support. Money has been sent yearly to Northland College, Conference Benevolences, Westville, and Tower Hill, and various gifts to Pleasant Hill, Tennessee, Tillotson College, the Church of the Good Shepherd, and Lincoln Memorial Church, from these bequests contributed in the long ago. Mrs. R. L. Rogers

served as president from 1926 to 1935 and since then Mrs. Fuller has been president.

We have noted the ideals and hopes of some of the church women in this year of 1926. Perhaps it would be well to pause before finally leaving this period of 1868-1926, with the separate existence of the Women's Boards, since we can at this distance of time perceive its significance a little more clearly.

Aside from the motive, and aside from the great accomplishments in the field, this period was marked by an important development of American womanhood. It is interesting that this organizing for missions was a distinctly Christian movement, in a sense the "first woman's club" to send out its help to other women. The W.B.M.I. was a training school for our Illinois women. Considerable has been said about what women did through the W.B.M.I., but not so much about what these organizations did *for* the women. These women could never have learned so much had they merely turned their money over to others to administer. The heavy responsibilities, the necessity for decision and initiative, were of the greatest educational value, and it was largely in consequence of this that peculiar loyalties were developed and outstanding leadership appeared among the church women of Illinois. They were in touch with great things, they saw and knew the women missionaries going out to the field, they became their personal friends, they were aware of international problems and movements. These great privileges of church women in Illinois throughout those fifty-eight years have seldom been surpassed and they can be hardly overstated.

The completion of the merger was a somewhat gradual affair, involving, as was to be expected, many changes and readjustments, not only as to the administration of the midwest offices, but throughout the local societies of the churches. The

very fact that a new name in place of the "Illinois Branch" and in place of the Illinois Home Missionary Union was to be found, signified the fundamental change in the set-up of women's work. The word "missions" was somewhat critically regarded by many because of what they felt might be an implication of unchristian condescension in its connotations. The word "Fellowship" which was adopted, seemed to imply, on the contrary, a spirit of friendliness, and mutual helpfulness. This is but one instance of that psychological history which is manifested through our vocabulary, and is an illustration of the trend toward a greater spirit of unity in purpose, of co-operation and a new outlook which characterized these years. The Congregational-Christian Women's Fellowship of Illinois felt its way slowly toward an adequate reorganization. We cannot give all these steps and the various minor changes. But the organization was finally divided into the Northern, the Southern, and the Chicago areas. These were sub-divided into associations. The committees for carrying on the various types of work are sixteen in number: Adventures in Reading, Box Work and Pastors' Boxes, Business and Professional Women, Caravans, Co-operating, Devotions, Missionary Information and Promotion, Nominating, Pilgrim Outlook, Program, Reorganization, Religious Drama, Revisions, Social Action, Thank-offering, and World Service. It will be evident that nine of these for the most part deal with the ordering and carrying on of the organization itself. Business and Professional Women is something of a sub-division of the whole, and six are distinctly philanthropic or altruistic in purpose.

Box Work and Pastors' Boxes is a form of service of very long standing, antedating the organization of the I.H.M.U. The need for such work has never appeared to diminish and it is still carried on with undiminished enthusiasm and devotion. It affords opportunity for those who are interested actually to make or pack articles which go directly to those in need,

and the material, visible nature of the work supplements that more intangible labor for the unseen and the far-away.

The money raised by the women of Illinois, aside from the newly inaugurated "Women's Gift," is now distributed through the State Conference according to carefully determined percentages, going in part to Home Work, including State Work, in part to the Foreign Field, and in part for the Conference expense. Thus the State Conference with its women's work is responsible for the work of men's and women's groups alike, and the responsibility of the women is merged in the responsibility of the churches as a whole.

Certain new phases of opportunity have emerged with the passing years which should be noted. The responsibility for the social needs on the part of the churches was clearly recognized with the forming of the Council for Social Action, and the women, many of whom were already familiar with such problems through the example set by women in clubs and various philanthropic agencies, were not slow to recognize that the church groups also must face such calls. The work of missions abroad, even the task of developing the church in backward areas of our own land, did not include all the vast needs which confronted us. Many felt that the church had listened somewhat ineffectively for too long a time to such problems as child-labor, intemperance, the migratory worker, gambling, and other ills. We had heard talks about the Indians in a distant territory, and sometimes had forgotten the slums through which we passed on our way to the Friday morning meeting.

"A co-operating committee," organized by Mrs. George R. Wilson in conjunction with the Chicago Congregational Union, set its mind to the problems of the various settlements, mission centers, and struggling churches of our city. The City Missionary Committee of the I.H.M.U. had already charted the way for this and had done effective work in many respects before

the dissolution of that organization. Now it was taken up anew. There were so many things needed in addition to the ever urgent necessity of money! Each of these centers of Christian influence was commended to the interest and charity of certain of the larger and stronger churches. The word "co-operating" expressed exactly what was hoped in these new relationships, and thus again a direct, personal responsibility was brought into the foreground.

These needs of the poor of Chicago itself, together with the wider-spread social tasks, have, with their new appeals, claimed a large share of the enthusiasm of Illinois church women during the years recently passed. Foreign mission work has not been forgotten, but it no longer controls so entirely the attention of many church women.

In the more recent months, since the approach of war, new and terrible crises abroad have compelled new undertakings. The refugee problem in our very midst has been brought to our attention through the Committee on Social Action. A War Veterans and Relief Committee has been formed. There is the appeal of famine, relief for China, relief for English Sunday-school children. There is the cry of the Red Cross. There is the sense of suffering fellowship when the church at home remembers the churches in conquered lands.

The appeal for help by the A.B.C.F.M. has changed and become more heart-rending. Mission stations have become centers of light and physical aid in war-scarred lands, there is travel money needed, money for those returning home, money for those escaping and carrying on in unaccustomed places, money for wives and children sent home to safety—and money to be administered for refugee colleges, for crowded hospitals, for bowls of rice among starving people—money for all sorts of things! The foreign missionary appeal claims the attention of church women with urgent necessity! The "Woman's

Gift," inaugurated in 1942, has found an immediate response in generous giving.

Certain special emphases have developed during the last two or three years before this date of writing. One of these is the neighborly friendliness of the various Associations of the state, leading up to the "Caravan" idea and the desire to exchange all worthwhile plans and programs. Another is the interest in religious drama. Many program makers have come to feel that "the play's the thing," with its vivid appeal and portrayal of motives.

The insistence upon a deeper spiritual life is evidenced by the attention given to the devotional period in most programs, the desire for services in which all can participate, and the repeated urging of private meditation and prayer. Prayer groups have been formed in some societies, and the printed material available is full of suggestions for the cultivation of the inner life and is much in demand.

With this deepened desire for a fuller devotional life for themselves has come a revival of interest in religious education for children and young people. School curricula are being examined, the relationship of public school and Sunday schools discussed, and the ethical and religious development of the oncoming generation is at the moment a peculiarly live and significant matter in the minds of many church women. Greater development along this line is indicated as probable in the near future.

The church women of Illinois are also becoming much aware of the greater movements of the church as a whole. The ecumenical movement, the World Council of Churches, and the general trend toward a united Christendom through the growth of a "World Christian Community" are subjects to which they have been paying alert attention. Recent world conferences have been interpreted to them through various

speakers, and the war is now emphasizing the great significance of these movements in the thinking of Christendom.

The Women's Department of the Chicago Federation is affiliated with the Council of Church Women, whose purpose is stated thus: "To unite church women in their allegiance to their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, through a program looking to their integration in the total life and work of the church and to the building of a World Christian Community." Through this trend toward co-operation and unity of purpose, the World Day of Prayer and the May luncheon, both directed by the Federation, are unifying forces for the entire Protestant group.

Thus the Christian spirit has moved in various ways, becoming more apparent now in this fashion, and now in that, down through the years, swayed by the larger movements of the church, reflecting the urgent calls coming now from the city, now from the home field, now from the state, and now from the world. But, always a living, irrepressible thing, it has grown and triumphed in varying forms. It seems as we look back that this Christian impetus among women has always awakened anew in response to personal appeal, a direct contact with the work, whether abroad or at home. The visual apprehension of a task has again and again stimulated new endeavor among them. In the course of these endeavors they have tended to develop toward systematic service, with more and more detailed organization of the membership. A conscientious realization of financial responsibility in response to quotas laid upon them has been evident, in spite of frequent failures of local groups. During the latter years there has occasionally been a tendency to follow the pattern of secular clubs, and to over-develop the social aspects of church groups at the expense of the unselfish and altruistic purposes. As pointed out in the Madras report, some of the more able leaders, especially in the highly educated and business and professional

groups, have tended to slip away from church activities into secular philanthropic organizations where there was a more open field for direct responsibility and corresponding executive opportunity. This general criticism may have been true here and there in Illinois. In the future planning for our church women it would be well to consider these desires for direct responsibility, for personal contacts with the task, together with the capabilities for organization and for faithful financial response already manifested. Social and educational trends will doubtless be continued and the greater world outlook and the deeper spiritual devotion now emerging will, we believe, guide the church women of Illinois, after the war is over, into even greater and more distinguished service for the Kingdom of Our Lord.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHRISTIAN DENOMINATION IN ILLINOIS

Among the indigenous religious movements which had their origin in the Second Awakening during the last decade of the eighteenth century, the Christian churches are not the least important.¹ They had their rise in three distinct and widely separated regions of the country and under different auspices—the movements of James O’Kelly in Virginia, Abner Jones in Vermont, and Barton W. Stone in Kentucky. The three leaders had arrived at their conclusions independently: but having found that they were in an essential agreement as to the rejection of all creeds, all theological systems, and all denominational names, they merged their movements in a loose fashion. The new religious body represented an overwhelmingly frontier movement, revivalist and evangelistic in character, manned by zealous and earnest men who, for the greatest part, possessed but little, if any, theological or even general training, and were proud of it. The majority were of the “farmer-preacher” type; accordingly, the churches they founded were predominantly rural.

Early in the nineteenth century (1805), Elder Clement Nance organized the first Christian Church of Indiana.² Within the next thirteen years the churches of this order spread throughout the southern counties of that state and pushed on westward into southeastern Illinois. They became numerous enough so that in 1818 the Wabash Conference, comprising the churches on both sides of the Wabash River, could be organized.

The most outstanding figure among the ministers of this Conference was the Rev. William Kinkade (or Kincaid or

Kincade), who had been converted in Kentucky and had studied in the home of that patriarch of the Christian movement, Father Barton W. Stone. He thus possessed an education much above that of many of his ministerial brethren. Prior to 1818 he settled on a small farm in Lawrence County, Illinois, and engaged in farming as well as preaching. But having become a member of the Constitutional Convention at the time that Illinois was admitted into the Union,³ he played an important role in this formative stage of the state's history. He is given a large share of the credit for keeping slavery out of Illinois. Afterwards, he served for two years as state senator. In 1828 he removed from the state and traveled through the East on an extended tour; in New York City he wrote and published a book, *The Bible Doctrine*, in which he restates the familiar tenets of his group with new emphasis. He wrote: "I disown all party names. I do not profess to belong to any sect of Christians. I fellowship all good people of every name without regarding how much they may differ from me in doctrines."

The hopeful growth of the churches of this order in southern Indiana was interrupted and greatly checked when Barton W. Stone's and Alexander Campbell's movements coalesced into one. When it became clear to the latter leader that his followers could not find a permanent home among the Baptists, he welcomed the friendly response from the Christians and finally the two groups amalgamated. The event took place at a union meeting in Lexington, Kentucky, at which the representatives of the two bodies—John Smith for the Campbellite "Reformers" and Barton W. Stone for the Christians—agreed henceforth to unite their forces: "Let us, then, my brethren," Smith proposed, "be no longer Campbellites or Stoneites, New Lights or Old Lights, or any other kind of lights, but let us come to the Bible and to the Bible alone, as the only book in the world that can give us the light we need."⁴

It was here that the new denomination, the Disciples of Christ, or Christians, as its adherents were henceforth known, was born. That the union was necessarily very loose, for neither group had any centralized authority which could act for the whole body, is evident even in the perpetuation of the double name: the former Campbellites preferred the designation of Disciples, while the former Stoneites clung tenaciously to the name of Christians.

Consequently, it was only those ministers and churches which refused to follow Elder Stone into the new union which continued an independent missionary activity resulting in the perpetuation and extension of the Christian denomination of the original order. But most of the churches in southern Indiana went into the Disciples-Christian union.

In Illinois, a new impetus to the growth of the old Christian order was experienced under the ministrations of Simon Hiller, who had been licensed in Kentucky in 1828 and had moved to Illinois in 1830. He had lived formerly in Butler County, Kentucky.⁵ He settled at a place southwest of Carbondale, which came to be known as "Hiller graveyard." He was accompanied by a young preacher, the Reverend R. G. Lindsey, who settled west of Pomona, Illinois, and together they started a preaching campaign in the approved frontier fashion as circuit riders. Their work proved fairly successful: in 1832 they organized the first church in a log house two miles west of Pomona, calling it the Cave Creek Church. Three years later it was moved to a new location, and renamed Mount Pleasant. Then in the same year Simon Hiller was ordained, and another church was organized in the vicinity of his home; this church received the picturesque name of the Little Crab Orchard Church. A third church was founded, in the same year, southeast of Makanda.⁶

The next year these three churches formed the Southern Illinois Christian Conference, organized August 31, 1833, "in

a most beautiful sugar grove" near the farm house of the other ministerial member of the little band, the Rev. W. G. Lindsey, brother of the Rev. R. G. Lindsey. By that time, the group numbered seven ministers who thus united in the common task. The new Conference met annually and in 1836 adopted a set of "Principles and Sentiments," the most important of which were the familiar dicta such as that the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice; the requirement of baptism by immersion and baptism of the Holy Spirit in the regeneration and sanctification; latitude of opinion; Christian character as the test of fellowship; and foot-washing as a scriptural ordinance.⁷

In 1855 the Rev. W. G. Lindsey, hitherto an important member of the Southern Illinois Conference, removed to Benton County, Missouri, and there organized, besides many churches, also the Osage Christian Conference (1866). The remaining members of the Southern Conference continued their labors. Simon Hiller, whose leadership was so pronounced that the whole group were sometimes referred to as "Hillerites," carried on his work as farmer-preacher for forty-two years, and is reported to have organized an equal number of churches—an average of one a year.⁸ It was asserted on his son's testimony, that Hiller "never read any books except the Bible, and would plow all day long and go to church that night and preach a good sermon." He died in 1870 or 1872.

That scattered Christian churches were to be found outside the existing Conferences is apparent from the fact that one such church existed in Jacksonville. Barton W. Stone went there in 1832 to buy some land, and two years later made it his permanent home. There were both a Christian and a Disciples churches in Jacksonville at the time. Stone refused to join either of them, unless they united. A general meeting was called to the courthouse in October, 1832, and after a

discussion "a little over eighty agreed to unite upon the terms aforesaid."⁹

A fairly large number of Conferences were organized throughout the state in course of time. Unfortunately, since we lack sources for the history of these developments, no adequate account of them can be given. A rather incredible, although a delightfully characteristic, story is told in explanation of this dearth of source materials: we are informed that the early fathers, fearing that the dead hand of the past might hold sway over them, were in the habit of burning the minutes of the meetings soon after they had been held! In that drastic way, which appeared satisfactory to all except historians, they strove to make sure that the future meetings would be wholly free from the baneful influence of the past. Be that as it may, we possess exceedingly little information about the Conferences other than those already mentioned: in 1833 the Southern Wabash Conference was formed. It was followed, in 1839, by the organization of the Spoon River Conference, which knit together the churches of the northwestern part of the state; by 1840 the work extended to the northern portion of Illinois and spread into Southern Wisconsin, as attested by the organization of the Northern Illinois and Wisconsin Conference; then the Illinois Union Conference was formed in 1841 which centered in Pike County on the Mississippi, south of Quincy; this was followed by Central Illinois (1852), Fox River (1856), which comprised portions of Illinois and Indiana, Western Illinois (1857), Southern Indiana and Illinois (1864), Mazon River (1866), and lastly, Jacksonville (1866).¹⁰ From this survey it appears that by the latter date the Christian churches were well distributed over the whole state. Nevertheless, all the Conferences did not survive until the time of the merger with the Congregational churches.

The year 1883 is among the most important in the annals

of the Christian denomination in this state, for it was then that the Illinois State Christian Conference was organized. This memorable event took place at Atwood on November 1, 1883, the chief leaders being the Reverends J. A. Clapp, J. L. Towner, G. W. Rippey, and Robert Harris. The official Minutes of the Conference begin with the record of the annual meeting of 1884,¹¹ at which the Constitution was adopted. The charter was secured on September 21, 1886. In line with the traditional principles, no creedal statement was adopted, for "we as a denomination have the best creed in the world, it being the pure word of God without note or comment," as one report modestly puts it.¹² At the time of organization, the State Conference consisted of three district Conferences, namely: the Central, the Southern Wabash, and the Western; the next year, the Northern Conference is mentioned in the records. As reported at the 1886 meeting, there were seventy-three churches in the state, with fifty-four ministers and 3438 members.¹³ During the next nine years the growth of the denomination was either surprisingly rapid, or the statistics were kept more accurately. It is well to keep in mind that when dealing with statistics, one is on very uncertain and unreliable ground: for the churches did not report regularly, and some of the apparent growth is explainable by the addition of district Conferences which had not joined at the time of the organization of the State Conference. At any rate, in 1895 the latter body reported 101 ordained ministers, 106 churches, and 7099 members.¹⁴

The work of the Conference, as reflected in the Minutes, concerned such perennial tasks as the promotional and evangelistic work, Sunday School and educational projects, founding and aiding of weak churches, disposing of the property of disbanded churches, and similar undertakings. One of the oft-recurring subjects of discussion was collegiate and ministerial education. Just because the Christian denomina-

tion grew up on the frontier, and the "farmer-preacher" tradition took a deep root in it; and further, because most of the churches of this order were rural, the problem of securing an adequately trained ministry was an unusually difficult one. The Union Christian College at Merom, Indiana, founded in 1860, served as the collegiate training center for both Indiana and Illinois. Nevertheless, in 1895 the Conference appointed a committee to investigate a possibility of establishing a college in this state. The occasion for this action was not so much an unusual demand or need for another college, as the bequest made by a certain Brother Beadle, of Lewiston, who designated the gift for a college in his town, stipulating other conditions besides. The committee was instructed "to take charge of the work with full power to act."¹⁵ The matter was disposed of in short order when at the next annual meeting the committee reported, tersely and to the point, that "they investigated the matter, were satisfied that it was a good thing, made the Citizens propositions . . . but they would not accept any of our propositions, and therefore, the matter was dropped so far as your committee was concerned."¹⁶

As for theological education, an attempt was made in 1889 to make a more adequate provision for it by enlarging the biblical department of the Union Christian College. The Rev. E. A. Devere was elected professor of biblical literature, and the Illinois Conference pledged \$300 toward the endowment of the chair. However, by 1893 the intensive campaign for the whole endowment was abandoned for a woefully manifest lack of success; whereupon, the Minutes record the sentiment that "this Conference is thereby released from its obligation of paying its pledge."¹⁷

The persistent opposition to professional educational standards for the ministry continued and made the work of the State Secretary of Education difficult. Nevertheless,

this functionary observed in 1898, probably more hopefully and optimistically than realistically, that "the very decided opposition to educational requirements for the ministers of the Gospel is, without doubt, growing less in its power and influence. Even in those conferences of the State where, but a few years ago, the vast majority openly and successfully opposed the introduction of educational standards, today we see certain commendable tests being required."¹⁸

Whether it was because of the low educational ministerial standards, or whether other causes were chiefly responsible, it became apparent in course of time that the denomination was alarmingly declining in membership. The downward trend was observable in all district conferences, but the greatest loss was sustained, between 1900 and 1931, by the Southern Wabash Conference, the largest in the state, the membership of which dropped from 3,200 to 2,100. The entire State Conference suffered a drop in membership, from the period of the highest peak in 1910 when it numbered over 8,000, to 5,620 in 1931.¹⁹ It is not surprising, therefore, that in 1918 plans were discussed for disbanding the Illinois State Conference altogether. The next year this body met with the Indiana Conference at a joint session at Merom. As the result of deliberations of these bodies, the Indiana Conference adopted a resolution to create a Convention which would comprise the states of Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, and Kentucky. The action was then referred to the Illinois Conference Committee on Resolutions, which in due time brought forth an appropriate recommendation. In 1922, a motion was proposed that:

1. Whereas, the work of the Illinois State Christian Conference is largely covered by the local conferences, and

Whereas the Central Christian Convention has been fully organized which will do the work the State Conference has tried to do,

Therefore, be it Resolved that Illinois State Christian Conference be dissolved by regular legal proceedings.

After a thorough discussion, this motion was deemed too radical, and a substitute motion, carried by 15 to 4, prevailed:

Resolved that the Illinois State Christian Conference meet biennially alternating with the Central Regional Convention.²⁰

But apparently it was too late to stop the downward trend, and the need for a radical action was imperative. In 1924, at the fortieth session of the Conference, the Resolutions Committee moved that further annual meetings of the entire Conference be suspended, and in their place only the Executive sessions be held. The official Board was to take over all the State Conference business. Apparently, only fourteen voting members of the Conference were present, and of these six voted for the motion, while eight against it.²¹ Although the motion was defeated, the Conference met, in 1931, only to merge with the Congregational churches. At least, no minutes for any other session are recorded.

Accordingly, as far as the Illinois Christian Conference was concerned, it was quite ready for some such merger as was being discussed by the national denominational representatives of the Christian and Congregational churches.

Negotiations regarding the union between the two denominations go back to 1894 when the matter first came up for consideration. The proposal originated in the New Jersey Christian Association. The Congregationalists appointed a committee which met with a similar representative group of the Christian Church at Haverhill, Massachusetts, and held a two-day discussion of the matter. But when the proposal came before the meeting of the Christian Convention four years later, it was strenuously opposed by the southern and western delegates on the ground that the New England con-

tingent was "selling out to the Congregationalists." Thereupon, the whole project was dropped.

But in 1923 new negotiations were undertaken without any reference to the previous attempt which had been defeated by the previous generation of leaders. The proposal was heartily approved at the meeting of the General Convention of the Christian Church at Urbana, Illinois, held in October, 1926, and by the National Council of the Congregational Churches at Omaha, in May, 1927.

Thereupon, the proposal was sent to the various state conferences for approval and consummation. The negotiations in Illinois culminated, on the part of the Christian churches, in the annual meeting held at LaGrange, on May 4, 1931, at which time the resolution to consolidate with the Congregational Conference of Illinois was unanimously adopted. This memorable meeting was presided over by the Reverend John Baughman.²² The Congregational Conference, holding its meeting at the same time and place, took a similar action.

The merger thus happily consummated, only gradually stopped the downward trend in the membership of what had formerly been the Christian churches. At present they seem slowly to be gaining. At the time of the merger the six district conferences of the Illinois State Christian Conference comprised eighty-one churches with a combined membership of 5620; of these the Southern Wabash Conference accounted for almost one half. Practically all the churches were small (an average of seventy members) and the vast majority of them rural.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHICAGO CONGREGATIONAL UNION

While Congregationalism was steadily keeping pace with the need and opportunity for Christian service throughout Illinois as a whole, by 1880 Congregational men and women in rapidly growing Chicago began to realize that their community confronted the church with very special and unique problems.

This realization of the peculiar, almost frightening characteristics of this already large city caused the pioneer leaders of Chicago to form, in 1882, a new denominational organization in Chicago—a specially created agency of their churches. For sixty years this organization has largely determined the history of the Congregational fellowship in the Chicago area and played an important role in the history of all Illinois Congregationalism as well.

This chapter is a brief history of this new idea in church life—the history of a sixty-year period of Congregational missionary and extension programs carried forward in the city of Chicago while that city was increasing its population from one-half million to well over three million people.

It is the history of the Chicago City Missionary Society, now known as the Chicago Congregational Union, which was called into existence in 1882 by urban conditions that required new social and religious institutions to meet the peculiar problems of the city dweller. These were problems connected with individual isolation in the midst of multiplied personal contacts, social stratification, and the beginning and intensive development of group life. The rise of the modern city in the '80's and

'90's had created a new social hazard ; it had raised the question, "Would the urban community be the hope or the despair of civilization?" Clearly, it might be either.

It was to meet this hazard, to answer the religious needs of the rapidly increasing masses of people in Chicago, and to project into every area of this urban community the influence and moral force of a Christian church, that early Congregational leaders gave form and organization to this new idea in church life:

It was a plan to create a closely associated union of churches, the central staff of which would have freedom to minister to every need and to engage in a great variety of services. It was a plan to create a central organization that would draw together the resources of the stronger, existing churches in order that this spiritual and material strength might be directed into new missionary projects in areas of great need.

The Chicago City Missionary Society was thus conceived.

This organization was dedicated to the promotion of co-operation and fellowship among the independent Congregational churches of the city, the starting and promoting of dependent churches which promised to become self-supporting, and the care of fields in the congested areas of the city which would of necessity always be missionary projects. The Society began its operations with eighteen such missions and with a budget for the first year of its existence of \$10,382.05. Today this same organization has an annual budget of \$160,000 and its spiritual, evangelistic, social, civic, and educational concerns are carried forward on a city-wide scale.

The history of this Society, like ancient Gaul, may properly be divided into three parts:

The period from 1882 to 1915 was the missionary era which will always be associated with the name of the Rev. J. C. Armstrong, D.D., the first Superintendent of the organization.

This was the time of the planting of churches and missions. It was a period of pioneer endeavor; these early leaders were confronted with the task of winning for Christ the multitudes of a great and growing city, many sections of which were without religious leadership of any kind.

The years 1916-1926 constituted a period of consolidation and readjustment. Already many churches had perished because of changing populations and others had been readjusted in their programs. The Rev. Reuben L. Breed and Dr. John R. Nichols were the leaders in this period. The Fortieth Anniversary Loan Fund was inaugurated to meet the need for new and improved church plants, and the name of the Society was changed to the Chicago Congregational Missionary and Extension Society.

The year 1927 introduced what might be called the "Present Era" in the history of the Society. It might well be described also as the "Post Lawson Era." On July 27, 1926, the first check was received by the Society from the Lawson Trust. This was the initial income from the legacy of the late Victor F. Lawson and was a visible and material evidence of the new era upon which the Union had entered. It was a period of expansion and reorganization, of widening horizons and enlarged responsibilities, of a richer and fuller service to the churches of the Congregational order in this great cosmopolitan center that had grown to be the fourth largest city of the world.

This chapter will therefore be divided into these three periods.

THE FIRST PERIOD: A PIONEER ERA

1882-1915

Chicago was not a large city in those days, as size is counted today. Horsecars still trundled business men downtown, and Ashland Boulevard was pretty well out. Nevertheless, the problems of a big city were not lacking. Three dis-

turbing factors are mentioned by Professor Frank G. Ward, Ph.D., in his early historical sketch of the first City Missionary Society:

In the first place, the big fire of seventy-one upset the equilibrium of the city in various particulars. Meeting houses were burned down and congregations scattered; homes were broken from their moorings and drifted into new channels; industrial conditions were rendered feverish by the loss of stores and shops, as well as by the influx of unattached laborers for the task of reconstruction. The mark of the fire of the seventies was a scar upon the social and religious life of the eighties.

Again, Chicago, in keeping with its destiny, was a stop-over point between the east and the west, whichever way the traffic ran. It was as much a seaport as Buffalo, with all the attendant vices; it was a railroad town where everybody changed cars. In those days, when farms and mines and timber were pulling communities up by the roots and shunting them westward, this city at the head of the Great Lakes caught the bad with the good in its surging life.

Thirdly, the peak of the immigration from Northern Europe was in the eighties. It was a sturdy stock, which has settled our farms and peopled our cities with a many-ply strength, but the task of adjusting old world traits with the faiths and practices of the new world without losing in both directions was no easy undertaking for a city already distraught as was the Chicago of 1882.

William Allen White, by implication, once said of a Congregational church that "it knew how to send itself into the heart of a community." It was this for which Chicago was waiting sixty years ago: a church life that would throw itself into the center of this expanding city. There were vast areas of the metropolitan districts which were untouched by religious influences, while the city "was belted and striped by saloons and pawnshops, concert halls and alley resorts." Conditions of vice and lawlessness called loudly for the organization of a planned effort to meet the moral and religious needs of the

city as a whole. One well organized society, it seemed, was needed to set the pace.

The Congregational churches of Chicago sent representatives to a meeting at the Union Park church on Thursday, March 2, 1882, to receive the challenge of the spiritual destitution of Chicago. The Reverend Burke F. Leavitt of Lincoln Park church was the one to present that report "which almost staggered belief." Five weeks later, the representatives of these churches met again, this time in New England Congregational Church, to accept that challenge. The conference selected from among their number seven men to lead this "new idea in church life," and gave them authority to employ a "Superintendent of Missionary Effort," to apportion the necessary expenses among the churches, and to present to the churches an outline of the work that was proposed.

The Chicago City Missionary Society was born.

It was not without experience that the new Society began its work. Eighteen missions were already operating under the direction and support of individual Congregational churches. Students from the Chicago Theological Seminary were carrying forward mission services throughout the West side, and Caleb F. Gates, who later became the first president of the Society, was one of the promoters and for two years superintendent of the Randolph Street Mission.

The Reverend J. C. Armstrong was called from his pastorate of the open-country church of Lyonsville to be the Superintendent of the new organization. It was through his untiring efforts that church after church was founded during this period, and nurtured through initial years of service by the aid and support of the Chicago City Missionary Society.

In the outlying sections of the city, it was the custom of Dr. Armstrong to call from house to house, and while talking over the family life and its needs, he would crystallize a desire for a church home, thus getting the enterprise under way

in neighborhoods which had needed churches but had lacked the common spirit to create them.

For the congested parts of the inner city, a different program was followed. The first President's report contains an outline of this plan:

As a practical measure, commending itself to our best judgment, we would secure in each sub-district a plain but neat and substantial building of sufficient capacity to accommodate the following associated lines of Christian work: The kindergarten for the little ones; the industrial school for girls; mother's meetings; preaching of the gospel; the Women's Christian Temperance work, with rooms as bright and cheerful as the saloons, and coupled with them, rooms for reading and innocent amusement, where young men could be invited to spend their evenings and leisure hours amid influences that would elevate, educate and refine.

Here, then, was the beginning of a program which has resulted in the city-wide fellowship of aided churches, community centers, neighborhood houses and strong independent churches now operating in the city of Chicago under the guidance and assistance of the Chicago Congregational Union. In this program of founding new churches in growing neighborhoods, and in ministering to the social needs of the more congested and poorer areas of the city, the thirty Congregational churches existent in Chicago in 1882 have given rise to eighty-eight strategically located Congregational churches distributed throughout the Chicago area and an important group of Christian social centers, augmented by special city-wide services that make important contributions to the life of the city.

The new Society was dedicated to the cultivation of a large field. Its leaders were men of extensive business experience, possessed of wide vision and of spiritual insight. The charter that was secured before the close of the first year was comprehensive enough for any one of the various definitions

of the Society's object, be it "the evangelization of this city in cooperation with other denominations," as one leader stated it, or be it, in the words of another, "the providential occasion for meeting a want, long felt among the Congregational churches of Chicago and vicinity, viz: a more thorough and practical fellowship."

This early incorporation gave the enterprise a business character from the start. It was not burdened by an over-refinement in division of labor; it was concerned with Sunday schools, church building, preaching appointments, and the affairs of any and all Congregational churches that they might become co-operative factors in the promotion of religion and morality in Chicago and vicinity. In the language of modern education, the Society was concerned with a "project problem" and it was organized to take advantage of all legitimate ways and means for the solution of the problem through a systematic and thoroughgoing orientation of the religious life of the city of Chicago as a whole.

The conference that called the Chicago City Missionary Society into existence was made up of one hundred and twenty-five representatives from the different Congregational churches of the city. This was considerably better than a three percent attendance of their total membership. From the outset, therefore, the contacts between the supporting churches and the Society have been close. The provisions of the constitution for keeping this feature active were twofold from the beginning. One annual member was chosen from each Congregational church in Cook County, and one additional member from each church for every \$100 contributed to the work of the Society by that church during the year just preceding the annual meeting of the Society. In addition to this there was the provision for the election of Life Members from a church, upon the payment of \$250 for each member. A list of sixty-six such members was printed in the second annual report.

As time went on, the provisions in regard to membership were modified so that the annual membership of the Union of two delegates from every church is identical with the membership of the Chicago Congregational Association, while the body of Life Members is perpetuated by annual election from churches on the basis of the Apportionment Plan giving of each church. There are at present nearly two thousand Life Members scattered throughout the Chicago Area.¹

The disbursements of the Society for the first full year of its existence totaled \$10,382.05; the tenth annual report showed the sum to be \$23,443.07; in the twentieth report it had climbed to \$31,743.23; the thirtieth report showed an endowment fund on hand, so the balances acquired some complexities, but the expenditures for regular work then totalled \$59,131.28.

There were two major sources of income for the Society at this early period of its history. These were endowments on the one hand, and the current constituency on the other. The current income was that received year by year from churches, societies, and individuals for the immediate work of the Society. This was the only kind of income that the organization enjoyed for the first fifteen years of its existence. Then the endowments began to come in, and with them came additional resources.

The Endowment Fund as a source of income was started in a modest way in 1894 and was supplemented in 1898 by Dr. D. K. Pearsons and his wife, who gave a double flat building on the South side. These were the beginnings of a constantly increasing fund whose income is available for the use of the Society. Two special campaigns for permanent funds were made during this early period of the Society's history, one in 1904 and another in 1912. Dr. D. K. Pearsons made a series of gifts himself aggregating \$152,000.

To catalogue all of the leaders who labored during this pioneer period would be to list the really active membership

of most of the Congregational churches of these years. That is impossible here, and it must suffice to refer only to some of the presidents and superintendents.

Caleb Foote Gates, born in Connecticut, April 20, 1824, came to Chicago when twenty-nine years of age. For thirty-seven years thereafter his life was bound up in the religious and business welfare of the city. Known as a Christian business man, he became the president of the City Missionary Society upon its organization, and worked hard for its success up until the time of his death in 1890. His efforts did a great deal to give the Society a broad outlook and a business character from the start.

Professor Samuel Ives Curtiss succeeded Mr. Gates as president. When Professor Curtiss came to the Chicago Theological Seminary in 1878 as professor of Old Testament, he saw at once what Chicago needed in the way of church work; he was present at the founding of the Society, and he assumed its presidency in 1887, holding this position for over fifteen years.

Mr. Edward T. Cushing of the Plymouth Church had been a director of the Society for ten years and he was called upon to serve as its president after the death of Professor Curtiss. He held the office for two years. Mr. Frank Kimball was president of the Society for the next fifteen years, and in a very real way it became his life. As a business man, he looked upon it as a Christian business enterprise, and he saw to it that the fiscal years closed without deficits.

There is one more name to be chronicled in this first period of the Society's history. No annual report of the organization for fifty years was published without having the name of the Reverend J. C. Armstrong, D.D., within an inch or two of the top. He was its first superintendent and he continued in that capacity until 1915. The last years of

his life have been spent as its Honorary Superintendent until his death in 1932—the fiftieth year of the organization's existence.

During the thirty-three years of Dr. Armstrong's active superintendency, he was instrumental in the organization of a hundred churches, the majority of which still remain and many of which are among the stronger and more influential church organizations of the municipal area. At the same time, the Congregational churches of Greater Chicago were welded together into a compact body, more keenly conscious of their mutual interests, their common destiny, and their responsibility to each other and the community.

Dr. Armstrong was born in Illinois; he went to school in Illinois; he fought with the Illinois troops in the Civil War, and all of his ministry was in Illinois. More than half of his life was spent in Chicago, and it was to "Build a Christian Chicago" that he travelled its streets and canvassed its communities and cared for its churches.

The crowning achievement of Dr. Armstrong was that of sharing and leading in the development of this "new idea of church life," of which the Chicago City Missionary Society became the living incarnation.

THE SECOND PERIOD: CONSOLIDATION AND READJUSTMENT. 1916-1926

The period in the history of the Chicago Congregational Missionary and Extension Society between the long and successful term of service of Dr. J. C. Armstrong, and the beginning of the term of service of the Rev. Ernest Graham Guthrie, D.D., in 1926, can be characterized as one of readjustment, reorganization, and enlargement. It was a period brought to a close by the Society's coming into possession of vastly increased resources—resources which caused inevitable changes in its policies and procedure and an enlargement of

its activities that was unprecedented in the history of this or any similar organization.

By 1916, Chicago had become the second city in size in the country, and the work of the Society was attracting the attention of church leaders in all parts of the nation as it yearly assumed an ever expanding program of spreading the gospel in the Chicago area by the establishment of churches, schools, and missions. The choice of a leader to take up this great work which Dr. Armstrong laid down in 1915 was no small task. After a wide search and interviews with outstanding Congregational men, the choice fell upon the Rev. Reuben L. Breed, who was then serving as assistant secretary in the offices of the National Home Missionary Society, in New York. Dr. Breed assumed the full responsibility of his office at the meeting of the directors held January 29, 1916.

Both by training and conviction, Dr. Breed was interested in and qualified for the work of the church in the city, especially with the foreign-speaking peoples. He brought to his work a vision and an inspiration which proved a real asset.

When Dr. Breed became Superintendent of the Society, the World War was in its third year and more and more the attention, interest, and moral resources, even of non-combatant nations, were being absorbed in this conflict. In April, 1917, the Congress of the United States voted to declare war on the Central Powers. The effect of this action was tremendous upon the nation at large; it radically influenced the program of the Chicago City Missionary Society, for during the remainder of 1917 and until the Armistice in November, 1918, and even beyond that date, the Superintendent and his staff devoted much of their time, energy, and resources not merely to maintain forces in the aided churches from which ministers and young men were being taken by the score, but in helping to care for and develop the morale of the men in nearby training camps.

The Society voted (1), to strengthen the personnel of the Waukegan church, which was strategically located to do an important service for the men at the Great Lakes Naval Training station; and (2), to co-operate with the government in furnishing speakers and teachers for the numerous services at Fort Sheridan and the Great Lakes station on Sunday and on Wednesday evenings. For months all the speakers for these services cleared through the City Society and other similar organizations. To this service of a patriotic and humane character the officers and directors of the Society gave many months of their effort and time, in addition to the care of the churches which had now become greater problems because of the depletion of their man power by the demands of overseas service.

Dr. Breed accepted these war burdens in the nature of a patriotic duty, and although they greatly interfered with the normal work of the Society, he gave to them unstinted devotion.

But the new leader was by no means neglectful of the regular tasks of the Society. There are several activities and changes of policy which are illustrative of the work of the Society and its leaders during these years.

Through no special fault of anyone, and due in large part to conditions existing among the religious forces of the city, the standard of professional service in the aided churches had fallen below that maintained by the national Societies on mission fields. The situation was set forth by Dr. Breed in his first annual report: "Speaking of the field force," he wrote, "at the beginning of the year we had in our service fifteen men who were not ordained, twelve who were not licensed, twenty-four who had no college training, and thirteen who were not Congregationalists." While recognizing the earnestness of these men and giving them all credit for the best of motives, he deplored the fact that "men so inadequately trained

should be face to face with tasks demanding the wisdom and experience of the expert."

There were twenty pastoral changes that year, with the result that all but one pastor were ordained or licensed and all but three in Congregational fellowship. Working in co-operation with the Advisory Board of the Chicago Association, with the Congregational schools for training ministers, and with the churches to secure funds which might enable the Society to offer salaries that would attract better men, Dr. Breed was able steadily to raise the standard of service in the aided churches so that it favorably compared in efficiency and ability with the men in the self-supporting institutions.

It was during this time that the directors of the Society first began to examine their policy of planting churches wherever openings might be found. They now saw the wisdom of a more careful, planned program of church development involving the federating and the uniting of churches, and the eliminating of those that had no future—a policy and procedure that was to attain its greatest expression and development as a result of the findings of the Research and Survey department created in later years.

It was found possible not only to unite neighboring churches of the Congregational fellowship, but to federate, in some over-churched areas, institutions of different denominations. This policy of uniting or federating churches of the same or different faiths wherever possible, and of eliminating failing churches, became the established policy of the Society. The number of Congregational enterprises in the area was less by several units at the end than at the beginning of the decade, but the membership was larger by several thousand and the place of the denomination was much stronger among the religious forces of the city.

During the whole of this period, the spirit of interdenominational co-operation made great progress, Dr. Breed giv-

ing intelligent and enthusiastic support to every form of denominational interchange. The Society's policy in regard to union and federation of churches has been discussed above; in addition, the Society helped to organize and was active in maintaining the Co-operative Council of City Missions. It has always been in hearty sympathy and full co-operation with the Chicago Church Federation since its origin, and when it became manifest that the Comity Commission of the Church Federation was better organized and equipped than the Co-operative Council of City Missions, and that the two organizations were covering the same fields, the Society voted promptly to participate with the work of, and identify itself with, the larger and more efficient body.

While the Chicago City Missionary Society was organized by the churches, it was, in effect, a close, self-perpetuating corporation, with power to elect its own directors and to manage its own affairs after the manner of the American Board. By action of the national Council at Kansas City in 1913, the relations between the national Societies and the National Council were modified in a manner to bring all of these Societies, including the American Board, into closer relation with, and under the control of, the churches.

In 1918 a movement was started by representatives of some of the national Societies in Chicago looking toward the reorganization of the Chicago City Missionary Society along the same lines. This led to the appointment of a joint committee of the Congregational Association and the City Society which reported in April, 1919, resulting in a change of the name of the Society to the Chicago Congregational Missionary and Extension Society, a change in its relation to the churches, in its voting constituency, and in its manner of electing directors. This action placed the City Society in exactly the same relation to the churches of the Chicago Association that the national Missionary Societies sustained to the National

Council, and was a step in the direction of real progress and democracy.

Reuben L. Breed was an indefatigable worker, never learning to spare himself. The burden of a great many responsibilities proved too heavy for him and he died on November 20, 1920, after only five years of service. His passing was a serious loss to the Society and to the cause of Christian unity and progress in Chicago, for his plans had only begun to mature.

During the last three months before Dr. Breed's death, the Rev. C. S. Laidman assumed charge of the office and during the year following the death of his chief, by vote of the directors, served as Acting Superintendent. Mr. Laidman had come to the working staff of the Society from the pastorate of the Lake View church in the double capacity of Assistant Treasurer and "Pastor at Large." He later assumed the direction of the Society's institutional church work—a type of neighborhood work which was just then assuming importance in the program of the Society. This seven-day type of church activity, with its community and social emphasis, seemed especially adapted to the aided churches serving in some of the congested areas of the city. Both by virtue of training and of sympathy, Dr. Laidman became an Associate Director of the Chicago Congregational Union, his many years of service having given him a thorough knowledge of the affairs of the Union, and an intimate acquaintance with the churches and workers that continued until his retirement from the staff in 1940.

The advent of 1920 had brought the beginning of the great business expansion and the era of prosperity which ended in the orgy of speculation and extravagance of 1929. During these years of prosperity and growth, the churches, too, imbued with a spirit of hope and enthusiasm, were contemplating new victories and preparing for a forward movement which should be world-wide.

The selection of a new leader for the Society was made

with a view to securing a competent superintendent for this forward movement. The selection was delayed somewhat while a plan to unite the Congregational Conference of Illinois and the Chicago Congregational Missionary and Extension Society by appointing a Joint Superintendent was considered. This proposal was finally voted down at a meeting on June 24, 1921. The conferences that were held between the state and city groups to discuss this matter were not in vain, however, for they resulted in a more sympathetic understanding of the relations underlying the two organizations engaged in a common work, and a larger amount of co-operation between those engaged in carrying on this work.

Realizing the advantage of calling to the position of Superintendent of the Society a man who knew the city and who would have some knowledge of the history and policy of the organization, the Board of Directors unanimously selected the Reverend John R. Nichols, pastor of the Rogers Park Church. Dr. Nichols had been a director of the Society and for six years its first vice-president. During the long period he had been affiliated with the group, he had served on nearly all of the important committees, thus gaining a good general knowledge of the work.

Dr. Nichols immediately began in every possible way to strengthen the various projects of the Society. Among other things, he turned his attention to the co-operative work of the various Protestant denominations. He also developed the policy of devoting a percentage of the income of the Society to work among foreign-speaking populations. Here was the initial prophecy of a great work among Chicago's cosmopolitan racial groups—a work that has reached a still greater expansion during the last few years of the Society's history. In 1923, service was already in progress among the Bohemians, the Germans, the Scandinavians, and the Finns, while programs were inaugurated as rapidly as funds permitted for the

Assyrians, the Mexicans, the Poles and the Filipinos. At the annual meeting of 1926, representatives of seven foreign-speaking groups aided by the Society had a part on the program.

At this time one of its most extensive projects was attempted by the Society. A study of the aided churches and their fields had early convinced the executive officers of the Society that the basic need of a group of vigorous, promising churches, with a meager and inadequate physical equipment, was substantial aid in a building program. Only the exceptional congregation was able to construct a new and enlarged building for its work without outside aid. The war had so delayed building enterprises that a considerable number of churches were facing the necessity of a better equipment and were looking to the Society for suggestions and assistance.

In keeping with its policy of serving the churches of the Chicago area in any way that may be necessary, and realizing the importance of such a building program throughout these many communities of rapidly growing populations, the Society turned its attention to this matter.

At the annual meeting of 1922, a committee which had been appointed by President Frank Kimball to make suggestions for a fitting observation of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Society, of which Mr. S. F. Nichols was chairman, reported in favor of a campaign to raise a fund, which should ultimately reach \$250,000, to serve as a Revolving Loan Fund to aid churches in building enterprises. The project was enthusiastically and unanimously approved by the constituency, and during the early months of 1923, the executive officers, together with members of this committee, were occupied with plans and preparations for this campaign.

The time set for the active canvass was June 12-25. However, it became apparent that the work would not be completed in that period, and the time was extended for some months. Some churches gave promptly and generously, but

others gave little or nothing at all. The campaign had to be terminated before the work was completed to make way for a movement which the Chicago Theological Seminary was about to launch for buildings on its new site adjoining the University of Chicago.

At the annual meeting of the Society in 1926, it was reported that nearly \$100,000 had been pledged, of which sum over \$70,000 had been paid. The pledges had one more year to run.

The six of the seven years following the inauguration of the Revolving Loan Fund witnessed such an era of church building as had never been seen. Within six months after the campaign had been launched, the money raised had been put to work, and at the annual meeting in 1926, it was reported that eleven churches had been aided in their building plans by this fund. As a rule the amount loaned to a church was about 10% of the total cost of the building. This work was carried on in closest conjunction with the national Church Building Society, upon whose funds calls had been so numerous and so urgent that demands from rapidly growing centers had been going unanswered. By this co-operation, in a period of three years, approximately one-half million dollars was added to the value of church property in the Chicago area and a dozen churches were equipped to do a work somewhat nearly adequate to the demands of the communities in which they were placed. Under stress of necessity, additions to this fund have been made from time to time from the income of the Lawson Fund, and aid has since been extended to self-supporting churches in large building enterprises to a degree that was never contemplated when the Revolving Loan Fund was first conceived.

In the year 1923, the Chicago Congregational Missionary and Extension Society and the Congregational Conference of Illinois were the joint recipients of a notable gift from the

estate of Mr. E. K. Warren, a prominent Congregational layman who resided at Three Oaks, Michigan. The gift consisted of a tract of land on Lake Michigan, in Berrien County, near Sawyer, Michigan. The sixty-five acre property was accepted with enthusiasm by the Boards of both organizations and plans were made to utilize this spot for the hundreds of young people and children in Chicago to whom the privileges of a summer camp were a thing unknown.

The camp became known as Tower Hill, and by 1924 an organization with a separate Board of Directors had been formed and incorporated. Funds were voted by each organization to erect appropriate buildings and to secure a water supply and equipment. In the intervening years, the developments have gone forward as funds were available, until today, Tower Hill has become an institution in the affairs of Illinois Congregationalism. It is the center for young people's conferences each summer, for boys' and girls' camps for the children of neighborhood houses and institutional churches in the city, and for many other meetings and conferences that are held there by various groups throughout the summer months.

But far and away the most significant occurrence in this period of the Society's history was the announcement of a great bequest to the Society from the will of the late Victor F. Lawson. Mr. Lawson, a distinguished citizen of Chicago and the builder, chief owner, and publisher of the *Chicago Daily News*, died on August 12, 1925. Only when the provisions of his will were published did it become known to any officer or friend of the Society and to the public that Mr. Lawson had made to the Chicago Missionary and Extension Society a bequest of \$1,300,000, (\$300,000 of which was to be administered as the Board of the Society deemed wisest in the interest of the New England Congregational church of which he had been an influential member), and in addition, the

Society was to receive one quarter of the residuary estate. The total bequest ultimately amounted to about four million dollars.

This fund constituted the largest amount ever given at one time for organized city work, and taken together with Mr. Lawson's contributions to the Chicago Theological Seminary and the Young Men's Christian Association of Chicago, which shared equally with the City Society as residuary legatees, constitutes the largest gift ever made by a single individual to distinctly religious work, and gives Mr. Lawson a prominent place among the generous givers of all time.

Victor Lawson, while never officially connected with the Society, had for years been interested in its work and a supporter of its various projects. He had previously contributed \$10,000 to the Endowment Fund, and his last special gift had been \$1,000 to the Revolving Loan Fund. So far as is known, Mr. Lawson never consulted with any officer or director of the Society about this final bequest, nor did he permit it to become known that he had made such provision for the future needs and work of this organization; but it is clear that he followed with close scrutiny the annual reports of its work and service.

Many months of waiting followed the announcement of this bequest before the *Daily News* could be sold at an advantageous figure and the Trust Fund in the interest of the Society and the other legatees established, so that it began to bear interest. Finally, on July 19, 1926, nearly one year after the death of the testator, a check for \$22,700 came into the Society's treasury—an amount equal to or greater than the total contributions of the churches to the regular work of the Society in any year prior to 1920. During the remainder of this year the fund yielded a little less than \$100,000, which brought the total receipts of the Society from all sources to \$165,000 for that year—which was \$100,000 more than in any

previous year from regular sources. In the following year the receipts from the Lawson Fund alone aggregated \$233,350.

A new era had dawned for the Chicago Congregational Missionary and Extension Society. The day of small things had passed. At the first meeting of the Board of Directors, called after the announcement of the bequest, there was mingled with a spirit of rejoicing a profound sense of responsibility. It became immediately apparent that a complete revision of the plans and the program of the Society was called for, making possible the projection of its work on a more comprehensive scale than ever before. An organization that had been trying to meet a need requiring an annual budget of \$100,000 on an income of half that amount, suddenly found itself confronted with the necessity of enlarging its program and scale of operations to a budget of \$200,000 and finally of \$275,000, without laying itself open to the charge of wastefulness or extravagance.

The story of this expanded program is reserved for the third section of this chapter. The bequest from the estate of Victor F. Lawson made possible the development of a great program of Religious Education and the formation of a scientific Research and Survey department to study the population movements and the changing communities of a modern city as these factors affect the lives and work of the churches in that city. The story of this last period is the story of settlement and neighborhood house work upon a greatly enlarged scale. It is the story of the "old line" churches whose American memberships have moved away, but whose services, aided by the new funds, have been maintained for the incoming groups of foreign-born and newcomers from rural areas who settle in the central wards of the city. It is the story of increases in the salaries and the number of missionary field workers, of the increase in grants made to struggling churches—in short, it is the story of the enlarged ministry of the present.

Before closing this second period, let us mention the personnel of the Society which guided its policy during this period of transition.

Dr. John R. Nichols had served as its Superintendent since 1920. He presented his resignation to the Board in January, 1926. Dr. Nichols was at that time past seventy. While yet in good vigor and in full possession of his faculties, he was quick to see that he could not hope to give to the affairs of this organization for any considerable time the vigorous and exacting attention that its enlarged work would require. An immediate reorganization of the entire program was necessary, and he believed that the man who would be responsible for carrying out these plans and of executing the enlarged program should have a part in shaping the policy of the Society for the coming years.

In June, 1926, Dr. Ernest Graham Guthrie of the Union Church, Boston, was called to the office of General Director of the Chicago Congregational Missionary and Extension Society, assuming the office in February of 1927. It was a position of outstanding leadership in the Middle West, with a challenging field, and with resources greater than many national and even international organizations possessed.

On the roster of outstanding directors of the Society during these years should be placed the names of the men who were lost to its work through death during this period. There was Mr. William Spooner, a director for thirty-five years and secretary for twenty-three; Mr. Frank Kimball, who was active for many years as a director and who was president until his death in August, 1922, and in whose honor a memorial dinner was tendered by the Board of Directors of the Society at the Union League Club on October 17, 1922; Mr. John L. Pearson, whose legal knowledge and experience was utilized by the Society on many occasions and who was closely connected with the business side of its activities; Dr. R. J.

Bennett, a director for thirty-four years and second vice-president for seventeen; and Mr. George M. Clark, who was elected to the Board from New England Church.

Professor Frank G. Ward came to the Board from the Hyde Park Church in 1914, and was in continuous service until his death in 1930. Professor Ward rendered expert service in the field of religious education, in helping to place the students of the Seminary with the churches, and in maintaining happy relations between the Seminary and the Society.

The president who served the Society after the death of Mr. Kimball was Mr. F. E. Reeve, who came to the Board in 1913, having been elected a director from the First Congregational Church of Western Springs. He served as secretary for five years, and in 1922 was chosen president to succeed Mr. Frank Kimball.

THE THIRD PERIOD: THE PRESENT ENLARGED MINISTRY, 1927-1943

It was the year 1927 that Dr. Ernest Graham Guthrie assumed the executive leadership of the Chicago Congregational Missionary and Extension Society.

The Board of Directors of the Society at that time faced problems that were tremendous in nature. Its members felt the need of a new, scientific study and approach to the religious questions involved in the life of Chicago. They felt that there must be an enlarged social vision for the Society, involving service in Christian settlements, in institutional churches, in public institutions, and in joint enterprises with other denominations to an even greater extent than in the past.

They felt the need of a careful safeguarding of old, established enterprises—the old “front line” churches, the growing suburban churches, the aided churches, the foreign-speaking churches, the Negro churches. They faced the stag-

gering prediction that within the next twenty years Greater Chicago would grow from three and a half to six million people, and that on the three outgoing lines of the church—north, south, and west—most of the suburbs would double and treble. They realized that this incoming tide would be Protestant—for the first time in recent history—and that for it, the church would have to make an adequate preparation.

In 1927 as in 1882, it was the resolve of the Society's leaders to adhere to one dominant purpose, namely, to help the churches of the Congregational faith and order to become increasingly effective in their ministry to all kinds and conditions of men in this great metropolitan area by drawing together the total intellectual, spiritual, and material resources of the Christian church, in order that the strength of the stronger churches might supplement that of the newer projects located in the less prosperous districts. Here, after forty-five years, the influence of this new idea in church life was still dominant, still composing the essential characteristic of the work of the Society.

One of the first convictions to be translated into action was that the Board of Directors must be protected from the discussion of innumerable details at its regular meetings in order that ample time could be given to the consideration of major questions of policy. This was effected without danger of neglecting the welfare of the churches by giving increased responsibility to the committees of the Board. To this end the entire system of committees was reorganized. The title of General Director was substituted for that of Superintendent to indicate that the chief executive conceives himself as one of a group of field officers, each with his special function, the General Director co-ordinating the whole.

The entire Board of Directors was divided into three major committees, each with its special responsibility. They are: Administration, Finance, and Support. A great deal of power

is vested in these committees, but in all major matters of policy and finance their decisions are subject to review by the Board.

Three groups of committees were then created to deal with the vast and complicated problems of the churches of the area. Each of these committees was designed to become a group of experts in its particular field.

The first of these three groups of committees is the *functional* group. It includes committees on Religious Education, Architecture, Judiciary, and Research and Survey.² The services of these functional committees are designed to be available to all churches of the Chicago area, whether aided or independent.

A second larger group of committees is made up of *field* committees which supervise, and which are concentrated upon, well defined groups of churches that are, in the main, facing the same general needs or situations. These are committees on: Churches to be Developed, Growing Churches, Churches in Transition, Foreign-Speaking Churches, Inner City Churches, Negro Churches, and Christian Social Institutions.

The third group of committees is known as the *co-operative* committees, and they deal with matters growing out of the relationship of the Society with other organizations. These committees are: the Joint Committee of the Congregational-Presbyterian Boards, the Committee on Co-operation between the Chicago Theological Seminary and the Society, the Nominating Committee of the Chicago Congregational Association, the Tower Hill Camp Association, a Settlement Committee, a Committee on Cooperation with the Chicago Church Federation, and the Woman's Co-operating Committee.³

This net-work of committees—both functional and administrative—concerned itself with work throughout every area of the city, as well as responsibilities that needed to be studied within the Board of Directors and in the wider de-

nominal and interdenominational fields. This was the machine, which, because of the intelligence and the human sympathy of the men and women who comprise these committees, and because of the vision and the devotion of the General Director, at once began to operate with a high degree of efficiency under the increased burdens of the expanded program.

During the years of 1928, and 1930, a movement began which led to another revision of the Society's constitution and a change of the organization's name.

It will be remembered that the Chicago City Missionary Society, as organized in 1882, was a strictly independent corporation, having no organic relationship to the Chicago Association of Congregational Churches. As time went by, however, and the Society grew in strength and influence, there were inevitable dangers of misunderstandings and overlappings. This was partially corrected in 1919 when the name was changed to the Chicago Congregational Missionary and Extension Society, and the scope of the Society broadened, as has already been recounted. Its voting membership was at that time made the same as that of the Association, with the Life Members, of course, additional. The Moderator of the Association was a member *ex officio* of the Board of Directors of the Society, and provision was made that any church seeking membership in the Chicago Association must first receive the approval of the Board of the Society.

Early in 1928, a committee was appointed by the Advisory Board of the Chicago Association to consider a revision of the constitution of the Association. At the first meeting of the committee, the wider question was discussed of bringing together the Association and the Society into one organization. The Society and the Association had much in common, but the question of the possible effect of such a merger on the great endowment of the Society was raised

by the legal advisers of the committee. It was their opinion that the risk involved was too great, if indeed it was not impossible from a legal point of view, and the two organizations decided to continue separately. However, in spite of the disappointment on the part of many denominational leaders, some gain was registered in the redefinition of the relationship between the Association and the Society.

Both organizations, in adopting new constitutions, included clear references to the relations of the two bodies. In general, all ecclesiastical functions were assigned to the Association, and all service functions were committed to the Society, while the field of operation was defined as being the same for both. "Ecclesiastical functions" were defined as "the historic functions of a district association of Congregational churches covering all the ecclesiastical relations of the churches of its membership, the control of Licensure, Ordination, Ministerial standing, and similar ecclesiastical procedure." The clause also provided expressly for the maintenance of the historic relationship of the Association to the State Conference.

On the other hand, the new constitutions made it clear that the Society had a responsibility in its service functions for all churches in the Association. The invidious distinction between independent and aided churches was removed. Henceforth, there was to be in Chicago a fellowship of churches, some stronger, some weaker, but all having the same rights and privileges. None was to be discriminated against because it happened to be weak, and none was to have special privileges because it was strong. The Society was to feel a responsibility for the total fellowship of churches in the Association.

This feeling of solidarity and unity was strengthened by the provision that the Moderator of the Association and the Superintendent of the State Conference shall be *ex officio* members of the Board of Directors of the Society, while the General Director and Associate Director of the Society become

ex officio members of the Advisory Board of the Chicago Congregational Association, and the General Director a member of the Board of the State Conference.

This same idea of unity was strengthened by changing the name of the Society from the Chicago Congregational Missionary and Extension Society to the Chicago Congregational Union. The amended constitution, with these many changes, was finally adopted at the annual meeting of the Society held December 8, 1930. It is an interesting coincidence that this action, greatly enlarging the scope of the Society, should have taken place in the same church in which the organization was born forty-eight years before.⁴

Enough time has elapsed since the consummation of this movement to see that the effect has been decidedly beneficial to the morale of the Congregational fellowship in the Chicago area. The Chicago Congregational Union can no longer by any stretch of the imagination be thought of as a great outside corporation possessing much power, but rather, as "Chicago Congregationalism," organized for common service and endowed with great resources that are being utilized to the fullest extent for the promotion of the Christian faith and the Christian church in this great metropolitan area.

In these final paragraphs of this chapter, something of this metropolitan service during the most recent period of the Union's history will be briefly outlined. The record can best be presented by offering a panoramic view of the work and the outreach of the Union at the time of its sixtieth anniversary reached in December, 1942, for it has been in the development of this program that all the energies and resources of the Union have been concentrated during this period. In the paragraphs that follow there will be offered a necessarily brief sketch of each phase of the Union's many thrusts into the life of the city. Taken together, the following pages comprise a complete picture of the work and events of the "Post Lawson Era"

—a picture of the present strategy of the Chicago Congregational Union in its continued task of "Building a Christian Chicago." First to be considered should be the two major departments of the Union.

The Department of Research and Survey has been basic to all other operations of the Union and its committees. In a sentence, the department is a highly specialized, scientific organization that is continuously busy at the task of securing a picture of the city's neighborhoods; into each sector of the metropolitan district, its staff goes at periodic intervals to secure a knowledge of that area's racial structure, the density of population, the condition of housing, the rate of delinquency, the nature of the community as to factories, commercial buildings, and recreational features, the mobility of the families within the area, the number of churches and the distribution of their memberships, and innumerable other facts about any given area of the city or about any particular church within such areas.

It is with such a tool that the Union is working today. It is on the basis of such information as this that churches are aided, that church programs are changed to meet the needs of their community as revealed by the survey, and that new projects of the Union are launched into areas that are revealed as being in particular need of such enterprises.

Here, in the activities of this division of the Union's personnel, is to be found the keynote of the present strategy of the organization. It is a scientific approach which the modern church is making to its problems; each aspect of the present program, be it concerned with churches in the suburbs, institutional churches in the inner city, or work among the foreign-speaking peoples of Chicago, is carried forward with a definite strategy in mind. There is constant supervision by field committees and executive staff; there is the intense searchlight of the surveys of the Research and Survey department. Truly,

it is a "planned Ecclesiastical Order" which is being created through the leadership of the Chicago Congregational Union in the city by Lake Michigan.

The second major department of the Chicago Congregational Union is that of Religious Education. The facilities and assistance of this department are available to all churches of the Chicago area, and are designed to raise the level of educational standards throughout the city's Congregational churches. It is under this department that the Chicago Pilgrim Fellowship has been developed.

The activities of the department of Religious Education during the summer months are manifold. There are the Church Vacation schools; each summer, throughout the city, there are such schools in from thirty to forty Congregational churches. Nearly two thousand children share the experience of living, playing, and working together under Christian influences and environment. The workers for these schools are well-trained individuals, and funds for some of the schools' partial support come from the Union.

Secondly, Boys' and Girls' summer camps are held, the Congregational Union making possible a ten-day outing at Tower Hill camp on Lake Michigan for one hundred and fifty boys and an equal number of girls during the month of August; these children are selected by the various Congregational institutional and social settlements in the city's poorer neighborhoods.

Thirdly, the department of Religious Education of the Union co-operates with the State Conference in the promotion and operation of the Young People's Conference at Tower Hill. These conferences are designed to offer high school students an opportunity—in the most congenial surroundings, in company with other Christian young people, and under the direction of experienced leaders—to face life's problems

earnestly. Likewise, a Leadership Training Conference is held at Tower Hill each July. The six-day courses are designed to aid church school teachers and officers, would-be teachers, leaders and counsellors of young people's groups, missionary education leaders, parents and pastors, to do their work more effectively in the local church. The Union shares the underwriting of this and the Young People's Conference with the Illinois State Conference.

In addition to the activities of its two major departments, the Union through its staff and committees now renders a wide-spread general service to the church life of Chicago. Study of recent annual budgets of the Union will reveal that funds and careful personal attention of staff and committees are expended under these important headings:

1. Churches to be Developed. Younger churches or churches where the community is growing. Some could not have full time pastors or the leaders they need except by receiving financial assistance.

2. Growing Churches. These are of two kinds—those within the city and those in the suburbs. These churches have developed and yet would not be as strong to take advantage of their potential growth if they stood alone financially.

3. Churches in Transition. These are older churches usually. The word transition indicates they may be crossing a line one way or another. Some are emerging out of some special difficulties, and in a few years may be strong and self-supporting. Others may be facing changes in neighborhoods that are affecting them adversely. These churches are being given special consideration and the Union's allocations are tiding them over periods of transition.

4. Foreign Speaking Churches. These churches contain mostly people from their home-lands making their adjustments with their American-born children in our city.

5. Negro Churches. While Congregationalists are a minority group among the Negroes, there being only two Negro Congregational churches in Chicago, our churches have people of leadership who are constantly working for the highest interest of the race.

6. Inner City Churches. Congregationalism, as other denominational groups, has the hardest battle to hold its place in the Inner City. These churches need to be fortified in different ways and funds of the Union are expended in their interest.

7. Christian Social Work. This is the point where our Congregational life of Greater Chicago, so largely suburban, takes its place in the deepest part of the city where life is very difficult for those who live there because of crowded population, old housing, and the dangerous influences of many things to all of life. In addition to the two large Christian social institutions, Bethlehem, and South Chicago, this includes work among the Negroes, the Mullenbach Industrial Institute, and Leyden House.

8. Joint Institutional Work. This is carried on with the Presbyterians and Baptists. One of the principal enterprises is the Chicago United Mission on South Des Plaines Street, ministering every day and night to the men of the West Madison Street area. This amount also includes expenditure for work among Italians and Mexicans.

9. Church Federation Projects. The Union has helped the Federation support chaplaincies at the Oak Forest Infirmary and the Bridewell, also the Filipino Community Church.

10. General Service. This large item in the budget of the Congregational Union covers expenditures for functional service to all the Congregational churches of the area. It includes the cost of group life insurance and annuity fund

payments for workers in churches and institutions assisted by the Union.

11. Student Field Service. Many churches receive valuable service from seminary students provided through this co-operative effort by the Chicago Theological Seminary and the Chicago Congregational Union.

12. The Fellowship Plan. Under supervision of the Woman's Co-operating Committee, this plan has developed lasting and mutually helpful relationships between all of the one hundred and five churches and institutions of the area.

13. Promotion of Benevolences. Finally, demonstrating that even the far-flung neighborhoods of a great city do not confine the interests and sense of responsibility of the Chicago Congregational Union, it has assumed, through a special committee, responsibility for the annual promotion of all benevolence giving to the Apportionment Plan by the Chicago Area churches.

The depression years of 1930, 1931, and 1933 brought deep, almost overwhelming problems to the churches of Chicago and to the work of the Chicago Congregational Union. The year of 1933, as the church and the world know, was the most critical of the period. This was reflected in the budget of the Union by a reduction of approximately \$94,000 in the budget of 1934 as compared with 1932. The reduction was made necessary by three causes, which had been operating for several years: (1) The swift dip in the income from the churches; (2) an equally heavy decline in income from invested funds; and (3) the practical cessation of return from loans to churches.

Retrenchments during these depression years were made at many points. There were three-fold, graded cuts on all salaries to which the Union gave support; some churches were reduced from a full time to a part time student ministry; other churches were closed or merged; there were cuts in the

budgets of the institutions and churches where adequate staffs had been built up.

Yet, as the General Director emphatically stated in his Annual Report of 1933, this did not mean that "the churches and institutions have been reduced in the same degree in the service rendered. On the contrary, in institutions throughout the city, more than ever is being done . . . with greatly enlarged services in evidence supported by great companies of volunteer workers which the vital support of the Fellowship Plan has afforded from the suburban churches."

* * * *

Such is the scope and outreach of the missionary endeavor and the church extension program of the Chicago Congregational Union sixty years after its founding in old New England Church in 1882, and sixteen years after the receipt of the first income from the Lawson bequest which has made such an enlarged work possible. It can be seen that the Union, in the last analysis, is making a tremendous Christian impact through its many churches and institutions upon the total life of Chicago and its environs. The progress may seem slow and the results often disappointing, but when we remember that this attack is going on day after day and week after week, and will continue through the years to come, the Congregational fellowship may well "thank God and take courage."

The most recent period of the Union's service in behalf of urban Congregationalism has seen a great depression crushing down upon the churches, its effects only gradually being overcome as the still greater and unpredictable dangers of World War II loom on the horizon. These more recent depression years and the early months of the war have brought trying, new burdens and new responsibilities upon the church and the Union. Horizons and fields of service have had to

be widely extended. Increasingly, the annual reports of the General Director have included paragraphs such as these:

It is difficult to realize the tenacity of spiritual purpose that has been needed to resist the effects of these years of increasing financial difficulty upon the far-reaching plans of the Union, and yet the third year of the depression closed without the surrender of any service. (1932)

Is it worth remembering at this annual meeting what this Chicago Congregational fellowship has contributed to the Re-Thinking of the Congregational service through seven groups from coast to coast—through the Movement for World Christianity; through the College-Church Conference in the Middle West; through the Preaching Mission movement of which Dr. Wilfrid Rowell is national chairman; through our National Commission on Church Unity which is now centered in Chicago; through the Council for Social Action, also based on Chicago; to the Executive Committee of the National Council to which we contribute our President and Dr. Albert B. Coe; to the National Board of Home Missions, to which we contribute its president, Dr. Hugh Elmer Brown; to the American Board on whose Prudential Committee we are represented . . . (1938)

We are concerned for our world—God's world. He who would limit the action of our Chicago Churches to Chicago has forgotten the central commission of the Christian Church. That is why we are laboring incessantly to turn the giving of our churches to the State, the Nation, and the World. That is why we established this strong committee of Promotion for the Benevolences of the Area . . . that is why we, the three areas of the State Conference, have succeeded in bringing Illinois, both last year and again this year, to the first place in the vanguard of the return, out of the depression, to our true responsibility for the evangelization of the nation and the world. (1939)

If this world crisis is not our concern . . . we are wasting our time in developing Church seminars on the World Crisis within our Woman's Fellowship and the Pilgrim Fellowship of our total Congregational youth, with the single aim that no Congregational mother shall give her son, and no Con-

gregational son shall give himself, in any part of this world conflict, without some help from the Christian Church to discern what are the ultimate and universal issues that now confront both the Church and the World. (1941)

The Chicago Congregational Union is often thought of as a tremendously rich organization. While it does have large resources it is not to be considered as wealthy. Such a description is relative and when the funds available to meet the needs are compared to the work that should and must be done in approximately a hundred churches and institutions in the Chicago area, the Union can more rightly be described as something quite the opposite.

The Union at the present time is operating on the smallest budget in a great many years. The decade of 1932-1942 shows a drop of nearly a third in budget income. This has not resulted from dissipation of resources but from several quite specific and uncontrolled causes. First, it must be recognized that gifts from individuals which formerly accounted for a large part of total income have more recently represented practically no part of the budget. Likewise the giving of churches has dropped to only a small fraction of what it was ten years ago. Finally the budget has taken a very serious and steady drop because a great portion of income is derived from invested funds. Investment conditions that have prevailed for the past several years have meant lower income for all endowments and trusts. Unfortunately, it appears from all authoritative sources that because of war and investment conditions, future income from investment will be even more drastically reduced.

Other factors have handicapped the Union's work. The Revolving Loan Fund, which is entirely separate from the regular budget, is devoted to loans for new church buildings. Seven-year new building loans were made to many churches in the middle and late 1920's. However, the depression caused

practically all of the churches to default on these loans. As a result, the fund has been exhausted and has necessitated an indefinite postponement of building plans of other churches.

There are some encouraging aspects, which can in part offset the negative statements above. Individuals and churches are again beginning to participate more actively in the work of the Union. A generous response has been made each year to the Committee on Support appeal which began in 1940. While these funds are not considered as budget income, they do allow the Union partially to meet special needs in building, leadership, and program of our churches and institutions. Church benevolence giving has shown some improvement during the past few years. If this can continue with substantial increases each year, it can to some extent replace the loss of investment income.

The Revolving Loan Fund condition is being remedied to some extent by repayment agreements with several churches which enable churches burdened by too great a debt to repay within their means and to eventually liquidate their indebtedness. This also means that gradually available funds are again accumulating in this Loan Fund.

As the Chicago Congregational Union faces the troubled present and very uncertain future it is satisfying to know that a sound and solid financial policy is in effect. Included in this policy are the following:

1. A definite plan that will conserve all principal funds now available or that will at some later date become available.
2. A plan of creating reserves to meet emergency repair needs, reconstruction needs, principal obligations, and contingencies.
3. A plan that gives to the local organization the responsibility of keeping Union owned church and institutional properties in good repair.
4. Curtailment of Union participation at certain points.

While the above appears to be a policy of conservation and conservatism it is important to know that even with curtailed income the Union has actually increased its budget assistance to churches in each of the years 1940, 1941, and 1942.

With a further drastic decrease of investment income as a real possibility in the immediate future, a serious curtailment of operations at the church end as well as at other points will be forced on the Union unless other income is found to offset that which has been lost. The only place now apparent that this income can be secured is from the increased giving of churches and individuals. Efficient administration will assume that all dollars possible will be available and expended only after careful deliberation.

It has been recorded that Dr. Ernest Graham Guthrie became General Director of the Chicago Congregational Union immediately after the receipt of the Lawson bequest and guided its work in the period of great development that followed.

Serving with him as Associate Director was Dr. Charles Laidman, who continued his loyal, sacrificial ministry in the Chicago Congregational Union for twenty-two years, retiring from his post of responsibility in 1940. Two years later, on January 13, 1942, there occurred the death of Dr. Arthur E. Holt, depriving the Union of the wisdom, the vision, and the scholarly contributions of this man who had been for more than a decade the Director of its Department of Research and Survey which had so fundamentally molded the Union's services and policies.

On September 29, 1942, the Board of Directors heard read by its president the resignation of the Rev. Ernest Graham Guthrie, D.D. Dr. Guthrie had served as executive head of the organization for sixteen years in which this Union attained vast scope and breadth of Christian service. Dr. Guthrie's resignation came after many months in which he had con-

tinued his deep interest and great service in the Union in spite of difficult periods of serious illness.

Appointment of the Rev. Niel E. Hansen, D.D., as the new General Director occurred on October 27, 1942. His selection was a supreme tribute and recognition of the high capacities and characteristics he had demonstrated so well during his work for six years as Associate Director of the Union. Something of the deep sense of responsibility which he felt upon assuming this position of leadership in the denominational life of this great city was expressed by Dr. Hansen when he spoke at the Annual Meeting which brought the Union's Sixtieth Anniversary to its end:

I trust that what you have done in bringing me here can have God's own blessing—because more than anything, as I work, I shall want to find His way and His help for us in this great city . . .

I am hoping the Chicago Congregational Union may become the strongest service organization of any group of Christian churches in the world. I hope the service the Union can render may become more important to the ministers and lay people of all our churches than the money the Union has to spend in its work. I am hoping, too, that we may truly be a union of Chicago Congregational churches with every one of the hundred and five churches and institutions a part of what all of us are trying to accomplish together.

You have brought me to this place when we celebrate the Sixtieth Anniversary. It is a long procession of wonderful people who have led the way to where the responsibilities are now of this generation. Let us remember laymen founded the old City Missionary Society and through the years laymen have guided its work and found the money.

You bring me to this place when the Christian Church of America must become stronger than it has ever been. While Christianity around the world is harassed, suffering, much of it captive or in prison, American church life is free from attack, untouched by the smashing blows of war. As peace comes much will be expected of the American Church, and we must

be strenuously at work doing our part to prepare the fulfillment of that expectation.

We must reach out to the men who are gone, wherever they may be to help them keep the Christian faith we gave them as children and young people. Whatever the problems and the struggle, our churches are charged for the duration of this war to so work and build their life that when the men who have seen battle come home they will not be a generation lost to our churches, but rather will respond to our readiness and ability to receive them back into the sanctuary and our total church life.

You have brought me to this place when important matters like these are added to all the responsibilities ordinarily carried in our work. I promise that together we shall give ourselves to the meeting of these responsibilities.

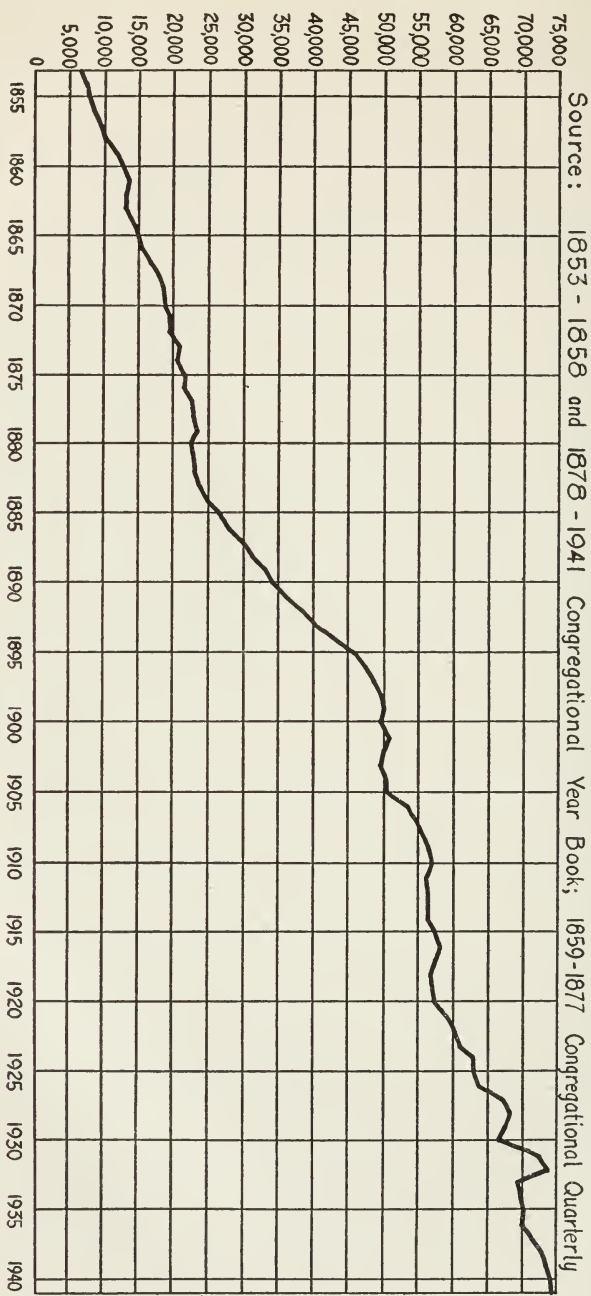
We have travelled the years of more than half a century in tracing the development of the Chicago Congregational Union as an important unit of the State Conference. We have reviewed the period of the pioneers in city missionary and extension work, have chronicled the years of readjustment and consolidation, and have studied in some detail the most recent decades in this history, during which this organization has reached great size and attained far-flung influence.

Through it all can be discerned the steady growth of a planned, efficient ecclesiastical order in the city of Chicago—an order not yet perfectly wrought, but one that with each succeeding year is more closely approximating the desired degree of cooperation of all church forces in answering the religious needs of the world's fourth largest metropolis.

Through its machinery, this organization now known as the Chicago Congregational Union has become the medium of exchange by which the total life of the Congregational Church in Chicago is made available in the direction of the acknowledged need. Here is the new idea in church life—an idea now sixty years old, but which is enjoying its greatest expression today. It is a principle that is perfectly symbol-

ized in the name "Congregational Union"—"an indivisible unit of a corporate life and service," ministering to the prosperous and comfortable borders of the city, as well as to its strained, gaunt industrial and tenement areas.

MEMBERSHIP of CONGREGATIONAL and CHRISTIAN CHURCHES in ILLINOIS from 1853 to 1941



CHAPTER X

FACING THE NEW CENTURY

The turn of the twentieth century signified for Illinois Congregationalism no mere chronological event, but the beginning of a period when the rapid adolescent growth was over, and the slower tempo of maturity set in. The very marked rise in membership, which had characterized the previous fifteen or twenty years, when the denomination doubled its members, was noticeably retarded. During the first forty years of the century the gains in membership were no greater than those made during the previous fifteen years, despite the merger with the Christian churches which added 5,620 members to our rolls. This slowing of the growth was caused by a variety of reasons, although none imply that the importance of the role the denomination was playing among the religious forces of the state was thereby greatly lessened. Nevertheless, the four decades under consideration were characterized by important movements of change, reorganization, and consolidation, rather than of expansion.

In considering the causes of the retarded tempo of the growth, the change in the tide of immigration into the state must be given the first place.¹ In 1850, 4.2% of the population of the state, then totalling a little over 851,000, were born in New England, where they were either members of Congregational churches or at least well acquainted with them; in 1930 only one-half per cent of the population, amounting to 6,631,000, were New Englanders, while 16% were foreign-born. Since the sources of the rapid increase of the population in the state—the foreign-born and the rural people—

were predominantly non-Congregational, it is not difficult to understand why this significant change in the immigration tide should have had an adverse effect upon the growth of Congregationalism.

Moreover, the urbanization of Illinois Congregationalism affected it adversely, while the other major Protestant groups did not suffer on this account to the same degree; consequently, their rate of growth was noticeably more satisfactory than ours. The Methodist Episcopal Church rose from 210,000 in 1900 to over 350,000 in 1934; the Presbyterian Church made a gain during the same period from 75,000 to 130,000; while the Disciples increased from 90,000 to 130,000. In comparison, the Congregational churches increased from 50,000 only to 65,000, and this predominantly in the urban areas. For our fellowship by that time had become largely urban: in 1935 our rural churches comprised less than one-fifth of the total, while one-half of the total membership in the state was concentrated in the metropolitan Chicago area. To indicate this tendency statistically, one may point to the significant figure for the twenty-year period between 1906 and 1926, during which the churches of the Chicago metropolitan area increased in membership from 23,000 to 32,000, while in the rest of the state there was a decrease from 35,000 to 30,000.

The urbanization of the Congregational work in Illinois is one of the most significant characteristics of the period under consideration. The center of gravity, which in the early stages of our denominational development had been in the south-western section of the state, had definitely shifted into the northern part, particularly the area of metropolitan Chicago. Accordingly, since Congregationalism is the strongest in urban areas, where the birthrate is considerably lower than in rural communities, this also had an adverse effect upon the growth of our membership.

Furthermore, the relatively high cultural level of our

membership tended to restrict our denominational appeal and influence to a culturally or economically select group in the community. By becoming increasingly identified with liberal theology, which found acceptance among the more intellectual classes of society, Congregationalism tended to lose touch with the masses of populace whose tastes gave preference to a more emotional approach to religion. It is a matter of common knowledge that the largest growth, particularly since the close of the World War I, has been registered by the groups of the highly emotional type.

And lastly, it must be admitted that Congregationalists have ever prided themselves on being poor denominationalists. As they had suffered considerable losses as the result of the Plan of Union experiment—both in Chicago and elsewhere—so in more recent times they have often lost constituency in various joint community enterprises, or by reason of the looseness of their overhead organizations, or by sheer lack of denominational loyalty or consciousness. Thus, for instance, the Plymouth Church, the second oldest church in Chicago (organized in 1852), became the largest Congregational church in this area during the notable pastorate of Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus from 1887 to 1897. During his successor's time the church building was sold for \$95,000 and a new one was erected at a new location. But during the next pastorate, held by an Episcopal clergyman, the new building and the invested funds, amounting, as reported, to over one hundred thousand dollars, were given outright, by the vote of the majority of the church members, to the Kenwood Evangelical Church. The Glencoe Congregational Church was likewise lost to the denomination. The Park Ridge Church, organized earlier than any of the Chicago churches (in 1843), became a community church and ceased to take an active part in denominational enterprises. The North Shore Church, one of our strong city churches, was alienated by a fundamentalist group, as were half a dozen

other churches. Although many of our smaller congregations have formed unions, it is to be noted that within the last half a century over seventy Congregational churches have disappeared from our rolls.

Confronting these changed and adverse conditions, Illinois Congregationalism attempted to adjust its policies accordingly. In regard to the immigrants, it is remarkable that as far back as 1867 the Chicago Association considered the problem of "How to reach our foreign population with the gospel." But at that time it arrived at the conclusion that "the aim should be to nationalize them and gather them into our churches, rather than to establish churches exclusively of foreign elements."² The recent endeavors to cope with the immigrant situation were only moderately successful, but nevertheless not without results. Since none of the immigrant national groups was of indigenous Congregational background, the work among them of necessity was of a missionary character. Accordingly, the first need was for trained workers of the particular nationality chosen for the missionary effort. To provide such missionaries, the Chicago Theological Seminary during the two decades of the previous and the first fifteen years of the present century developed a number of foreign institutes—the German, which was transferred to Chicago in 1882 from Crete, Nebraska; the Swedish; the Danish-Norwegian; and lastly the Finnish. Slavic workers, for the greatest part, were educated at a similar institute conducted by the Graduate School of Theology of Oberlin College. Consequently, a number of fairly strong centers of religious work was developed among the Germans, the Czechs, and several other foreign-language groups. As could be expected, the largest number of churches was organized among the Germans, since they were the most numerous. Under the leadership of their superintendents, the Reverend George E. Albrecht and Dr. M. C. Eversz, the missionary work yielded fairly

satisfactory results. When in 1892 the German Conference was organized, the German churches which had hitherto belonged to the Chicago Association withdrew to join the new body.³

This event was but typical of the course taken by the Swedish Covenant churches, which likewise withdrew to join their own denominational groups. Moreover, since in the very nature of the case, the intention of the missionary leaders was to aid the newcomers in making their adjustments to the life of their newly-adopted country without the loss of their religious connections—not to perpetuate the racial or national traditions, language and customs of the foreign groups—it was expected that in the end the immigrant churches would be absorbed into the English-speaking churches. This was normally the result of such missionary work. Nevertheless, such institutions as the Bethlehem Center, founded among the Chicago Czechs by the Reverend E. A. Adams and named after the Bethlehem Chapel, the cradle of the Czech Reformation, still continues its ministry to these people, although it has been changed into a community house. The church which exists in connection with it no longer carries on any work in Czech.

The problems growing out of the industrialization of modern society, and the peculiar religious tasks resulting therefrom, were likewise not neglected. In fact, Congregationalism was in the forefront of such movements, and has contributed probably the largest number of outstanding leaders to it. Illinois, and particularly Chicago, Congregationalism contributed its share to this vital religious movement, pre-eminently in the person of Dr. Graham Taylor, who came, in 1893, to the faculty of the Chicago Theological Seminary as the first professor of Christian Sociology in any theological school in the country. He soon added greatly to his influence as well as to his labors by founding, at first at his own financial

risk, the Chicago Commons, a social settlement in one of the worst wards in Chicago, largely settled by Italians. There he moved with his family, to begin his ministrations to his new neighbors, and to provide a laboratory for his students. The writer heard Dr. Taylor discuss this action, which was prompted by the conviction that no souls are saved at a distance: "And the Word became flesh," he exclaimed in a voice which trembled with emotion, while tears filled his eyes. The influence which he exercised upon the successive generations of his students, to many of whom he communicated his own burning zeal for the redemption of men from corrupting environment as well as from personal sin, was incalculable. It was largely his infectious enthusiasm which made Midwestern Congregationalism social minded. But his influence did not stop there, for he was a tremendous reformatory force in the social, economic, and political life of the city, state, and nation. Even so his exuberant energies were not exhausted by the exacting duties as seminary professor, head resident of a social settlement, and an influential civic reformer; in 1908 he founded the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, which in course of time was incorporated into the University of Chicago as the Department of Social Service and Administration.

Among the significant changes which made modern Congregationalism what it is, the theological reorientation holds a prominent place. Biblical criticism, the various theories of evolution, the growing emphasis upon the social implications of the gospel, affected the theological thinking of the decades just prior to the turn of the century throughout Christendom. Illinois Congregationalism reflected in its own geographical sphere these world-moving forces.

Fifty years ago, the theological temper of our constituency was prevailingly conservative, and fervently evangelical, if not evangelistic. The organ of mid-western Congregation-

alism, *The Advance*, faithfully reflected this spirit of theological conservatism. Under the editorial leadership of Dr. F. A. Noble, Dr. Simon Gilbert, Reverend H. S. Harrison and Reverend J. A. Adams—the last named the keenest and the most vitriolic writer of them all—the paper was serving as “a defender of the faith once delivered to the saints.” It is asserted by the former managing editor of this journal, Edward T. Merrell,⁴ that the opposition of his paper was responsible for the fact that the notable Scotch theologian, Dr. James Denney, best known to fame as the author of *Jesus and the Gospel*, and *The Atonement and the Modern Mind*, was not elected successor to Dr. Boardman in the Chicago Theological Seminary. Dr. Denney delivered in 1894 a course of lectures in the Seminary which was published “at the request of the Faculty of that Institution” under the title *Studies in Theology*.⁵ It is extremely difficult to see what proved objectionable in these lectures even to the most conservative of hearers. To be sure, the ninth lecture, dealing with the authority of Scripture, was rewritten; but the author assures us that this was not done “with the view of retracting or qualifying anything, but in order . . . to obviate misconception.” Dr. Denney goes so far in his conservative formulation of doctrine as to justify, in a certain sense, that shibboleth of Calvinistic orthodoxy, the doctrine of “total depravity.”⁶ What made him unacceptable to the Congregationalists of Chicago is indeed something of a mystery!

But even more characteristic of the theological temper of the times is the case of Dr. George H. Gilbert, professor of New Testament in the Chicago Theological Seminary. After he had held his post for fourteen years, his changing views regarding the person of Jesus Christ occasioned an outburst of severe criticism, and in the end led to his resignation. At the meeting of the Chicago Ministers' Union in April, 1900, a resolution was adopted which stated that

Whereas, The teachings of Professor George H. Gilbert have seriously impaired the confidence of the Churches in the Seminary,

Therefore, Be it resolved that it is the judgment of the Chicago Ministerial Union that it would be well for the authorities of the Seminary to take such action regarding Professor Gilbert at the approaching Triennial Convention as will restore the confidence of the churches.⁷

Although this resolution was finally laid on the table, pending the action of the Seminary directors, yet in some mysterious fashion it found its way into *The Advance*. The Board of Directors, as a matter of fact, had been considering the matter ever since the previous year, particularly after the publication of Gilbert's *The Revelation of Jesus*, in which the author is said to have denied the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ.⁸ At the time of the interview with the Board, Dr. Gilbert declared that "his published teachings were . . . avowedly partial and incomplete . . . and further, that a forthcoming volume completing his system of teaching might be expected to give a different impression." Consequently, the Board voted to "suspend action until the volume intended should be published."⁹ Thereupon, the Directors reported the matter at the Triennial Convention, and suggested that the professor be granted a year's leave of absence for the purpose of preparing a volume "completing his system of New Testament teaching; provided, that the volume in question shall be prepared for publication and advance sheets be placed in the hands of the directors not later than the first of April, 1901"; and that if the accord hoped for with the doctrinal basis of the Seminary should fail to develop to the satisfaction of the Board at their next annual meeting, "at that date Professor George H. Gilbert shall withdraw from the Faculty of the Institution."¹⁰

Although Dr. Gilbert accepted the condition laid down by the Board, he failed to fulfill it, for apparently he either

did not meet the time limit, or his work was not deemed in accord with the doctrinal basis of the Seminary; at any rate, in May, 1901, he handed in his resignation wherein he frankly acknowledged his departure from the doctrinal standard:

The demand of the times . . . is that the minister shall be scientific in his methods and this means, among other things, that he shall be an independent interpreter of the Bible. But when one begins to interpret the Bible scientifically, one becomes conscious of a difference between its teachings and the current traditional theology. The more fundamental the investigation, the greater the difference is seen to be . . .¹¹

Brave words of a gallant scholar, whose conscientious stand undoubtedly helped to change the thinking of the age to more liberal and modern views!

Despite a number of less conspicuous cases of a similar nature, where ministers resigned their charges on account of theological scruples, the forces of liberalism were steadily gaining. In fact, it is astonishing how quickly and generally they became victorious. In the light of their success, one is forced to regard the cases of opposition to liberalism as a desperate rear guard action in a losing fight. An honored and representative member of the faculty of the Seminary published, as late as 1904, an article in which he interpreted the theology of Congregationalism as comprising an emphasis upon the Scriptures as "divinely inspired and of supreme authority," and on creeds "as an expression of the church's apprehension of the Scriptures, as a bond of union, and as a test of fellowship, both for congregations and representative bodies."¹² But such views, nevertheless, already belonged to the past which was waning, and not to the creative forces of the day. The Seminary itself in course of time ceased to demand of its faculty a subscription to any creedal statement, and at the present time the only requirement it makes is that its members belong to some evangelical communion.

Moreover, the Chicago Congregational Association likewise liberalized its requirements for membership in the body. The original Constitution of the body comprised a statement of faith, an assent to which was required as a condition for admittance to membership. The creed was thoroughly Calvinistic of the Westminster confession variety; later, the so-called "Creed of 1883" was substituted for it, and finally, the Apostles Creed took its place. Those who refused to submit to this creedal test were in effect deprived of ministerial standing. In 1906 or 1907, the Rev. J. W. Frederick Davies and the Rev. Joel Hunter joined the Association, but wrote after their signature, "not the creed." In 1908 the subscription requirement was again challenged by two young ministers, the Reverend Cyrus A. Osborne, who for the last thirty-four years has served as the honored registrar of the Chicago Association, and the Reverend Clarence T. Brown. They declined to sign the Apostles Creed and requested that the creedal test be removed altogether. A committee, of which Dr. W. E. Barton was chairman, was appointed to consider the matter. It recommended that the creed be henceforth regarded as a testimony and not a creedal test. The proposal was adopted by the Association, and some five years later the requirement of signing the Constitution itself was abrogated.

In this liberalizing movement, Illinois Congregationalism shared in a similar trend manifesting itself in the whole denomination. In the end, this tendency found expression in a creedal statement formulated in terms of the liberal thinking of the times, in the "Kansas City Creed" of 1913. The chief author of the Creed was Dr. William E. Barton, pastor of the First Congregational Church of Oak Park, who served not only as secretary of the Committee of Nineteen appointed by the Boston Council of 1910, but as chairman of the Committee on Constitution as well. The Creed was part of the Constitution. The preliminary draft was prepared by Dr.

Barton alone, and approved for submission to the Committee by the only other member, Dr. Raymond Calkins. This original draft had been in use for several years, as a creedal statement in Dr. Barton's own church, but was very different from the final form. The whole intricate and complicated revision of the statement before it finally emerged in its final form is described with great detail by Dr. Barton in a series of articles published in *The Advance*.¹³ The preponderant share which he had in the composition of the Creed is further evident from the fact that it was he who wrote the draft of the final form; moreover, it may be interesting to note, in view of the importance of the document, that it was written in the University of Chicago Club library, when Dr. Barton "found himself with a spare hour." It was this draft, which after much additional modification was finally adopted. Many years afterward, Dr. Barton described his share in the composition of this famous pronouncement in a rather modest manner as follows:

The creed which we wrote, which has been adopted by hundreds of our churches, was not wholly my own work, for we wrought long over all portions of our report, but I wrote the original draft and the amendments were mainly recast in my language.¹⁴

Although everywhere it was hailed as an almost inspired statement of the faith held by our fellowship and still retains its function unchallenged, here and there voices were raised in alarm against not so much what it said as what it left unsaid. In Illinois it was the honored pastor of the Elgin First Church, Dr. Charles L. Morgan, who presented a communication from the Elgin Association at the 1915 meeting of the Conference. The resolution deprecated the omission of the preamble from the commonly adopted printed form of the Creed, which affirms "the steadfast allegiance of the churches composing this Council to the faith which our fathers confessed, which,

from age to age, has found expression in the historic creeds of the Church Universal and of this Communion," and of faith in "the deity of the Lord Jesus, in His miraculous birth, miraculous works, and miraculous resurrection."¹⁵

Dr. Barton responded to the overture by asserting that the Elgin Association was at liberty, if it so wished, "to add to this declaration of the Kansas City Creed such doctrines as it desires more particularly to emphasize." But as for the Conference, it deemed it sufficient to affirm its approval of the Council declaration.

This reply did not satisfy Dr. Morgan, who attacked, in a heated address delivered at the meeting of the Conference next year, the report of the Committee on Polity made by Dr. Barton. The ensuing debate becoming acrimonious, and the Conference not being in sympathy with Dr. Morgan's contention, as the final vote revealed, the matter was finally disposed of by a substitute motion presented by the Reverend C. A. Osborne, who offered it in order to terminate a profitless discussion. His resolution was to the effect that

Whereas, The Preamble of our present Constitution makes due recognition of our loyalty to the faith of our fathers and the historic creeds of Christendom,

Therefore, Resolved, That we decline to add to or subtract from this adequate statement of our faith and our fellowship.¹⁶

Along with these significant theological changes, there also occurred during the whole period under consideration important organizational developments. The first of these was the adoption of a thorough revision of the Constitution of the Conference which inaugurated a new era in the work of the state. Even more revolutionary was the change made in 1936 whereby the territory of the Conference was divided into three areas to be administered separately. Many other important reorganizations also took place between these two

events. First of all, then, was the change proposed by the Committee on Constitution headed by Dr. Barton, and adopted by the state body on May 17, 1910, whereby the original Constitution of 1844 was thoroughly revised and amended, and the title of the body was changed from the State Association to the Congregational Conference of Illinois. The chief feature of the new order of things was the provision for a permanent state superintendent, who was charged with the "general oversight and direction of the work in the State, modified and restricted by the powers given to the Trustees or their Executive Committee and such rules as they may adopt."

Nine trustees at large were elected at the same meeting and instructed to proceed with the incorporation of the Conference. The first meeting of the new body was held on June 23, 1910, at which time Dr. Barton was elected chairman. The district associations were instructed to elect their members of the Board of Trustees at the Autumn meeting.

At the next annual meeting (1911) of the Conference, the Reverend George T. McCollum, D.D., hitherto Superintendent of the Illinois Home Missionary Society, was unanimously elected Superintendent of the Congregational Conference of Illinois. Other provisions of the new Constitution could not go into effect until after the expiration of one year, when the nine trustees at large could present their report concerning the completion of the organization on the new basis. Their report was adopted in 1911, and the Conference then began its work under the full Board of Trustees. Among the most important changes effected at this time was the adoption of an interlocking directorate of the Illinois Home Missionary Society and of the Conference. Under the terms of this plan, the work and the financial relations of the former organization passed under the control of the trustees of the Conference.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the Missionary Society

continues its corporate existence with its membership of twenty-seven and its Board of Directors, who are also at the same time Trustees of the Conference. Every vested right of the Society has been preserved under the new arrangement.

The new Conference, as the result of the extensive reorganization, felt an upsurge of vigor and attacked the problems confronting it with a new strength. This was manifested, among other ways, by the founding of a new publication which was to serve the interests of the Conference. The decision was taken by the Executive Committee on December 5, 1911, at which time Dr. Robert W. Gammon was appointed editor. Thus *The Pilgrim Outlook* was started on its career which, like the course of true love, was not always smooth.

Moreover, the work soon called for a more intensive cultivation of the field, and in 1912 the Executive Committee called the Reverend Walter Spooner to the position of state evangelist. He proved a most happy choice, and did good work not only in conducting successful evangelistic campaigns which increased the membership of the churches, but found himself performing much appreciated service as "finangelist" of the churches. In 1920, the staff of the Conference was still further enlarged by the addition of the Reverend Charles E. Enlow as field worker.

Having accomplished this far-reaching reorganization of the state denominational machinery, and having served as the guiding spirit as well as the chief agent during the initial stages of the new order, Dr. Barton resigned as chairman of the Board of Trustees "because of the heavy pressure of other work. . . . We are sailing in clear waters," he asserted. "We are out of debt, have a small balance in the treasury, and a growing Administrative Fund. All departments of our work are in a healthy condition."¹⁸ No one, during this period, had done more for the Illinois Congregationalism than Dr. Barton, and no other Illinois Congregationalist had

been more influential in the denominational leadership than he!

It was during this time that the Chicago Congregational Association became financially the strongest unit in the state, far outstripping in contributions to the Conference all the rest of the associations. In 1912, Superintendent McCollum reported that of the \$10,445 received during the year, 65% came from the churches of the Chicago Association (in addition to about \$25,000 which they had contributed to the Chicago City Missionary Society), and only the remaining 35% from the rest of the state. "In other words, 40% of the membership of our churches, comprised by the Chicago Association, . . . contributed 65% of the funds for the carrying on of the work in the State outside Chicago; and 60%-plus of the membership of our churches in the State, outside the city of Chicago, contributed 35% of the receipts of the Conference for home missionary work."¹⁹

Moreover, the administrative business of the Chicago Association increasing to such an extent that it could not be attended to efficiently by two yearly meetings held by the body, Dr. Barton suggested and carried to a successful conclusion another innovation. This was the organization of the Advisory Board, consisting of ministers and laymen representing about fifteen churches. They hold monthly meetings, at which all the administrative work, such as admission to and dismissal from the membership are granted, applicants for licensure are examined, requests for ordination are acted upon, etc. The usefulness of such a committee being generally conceded, other associations all over the country soon followed the Chicago example.

Another important organizational change which occurred at this time was the integration of the Chicago City Missionary Society into the Association. The former body, organized in 1882, was a closed corporation, not organically controlled by the churches. The Chicago Association early developed a

concern for a measure of democratic control of such missionary agencies as the Chicago City Missionary Society. In fact, it felt that even such national bodies as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which was then likewise a closed corporation, should be organically integrated into the National Council. On May 3, 1892, the Association resolved that the "time has come when the Congregational churches should be represented by delegates in the management of the American Board." But nothing came of it at the time, although the Kansas City Council of 1913 actually carried out the proposal. Similarly, in 1914, the Chicago City Missionary Society partially surrendered its independent character by consenting to allow the Association the privilege of nominating one-third of its directors. But it was not until six years later, as the result of the persuasive efforts of Dr. John P. Sanderson, that the Missionary Society consented to make the electorate of the Chicago Association the electorate of the Society. Thereupon, the name of the latter body was changed to the Chicago Missionary and Extension Society. This reorganization brought the Society into the same relationship to the Association which the national missionary boards held in respect to the denomination as a whole.²⁰

Furthermore, a significant development was initiated by a group of Chicago and Illinois business men and ministers in the organization of Congregational Brotherhoods which were to coordinate and unify all men's organizations. The proposal was presented to the National Council meeting at Cleveland (1907), where it was authorized by the Committee of Twenty-Nine. The Reverend Frank Dyer, pastor of the Waveland Avenue Church, Chicago, was elected its first general secretary at the first Convention held at Detroit, Michigan, on April 28-30, 1908; but later was succeeded by Dr. Henry A. Atkinson. Unfortunately, the work envisaged for the new organization lagged for lack of funds. On the other hand,

the Cleveland Council voted the appointment of an industrial secretary who would be responsible for labor and industrial outreach of the denomination, made sensitive to its duties and responsibilities in labor relations by such prophets of the social gospel as Graham Taylor and Washington Gladden. But no funds could be raised for the secretary's salary. In the end, Dr. Atkinson was drafted for this responsible post, for he possessed personal aptitude for it and was imbued with social passion. By 1913, the Brotherhood Movement became virtually identified with the National Council's Social Action Committee, and the two movements thus practically merged. Dr. Atkinson served as the general secretary of both bodies.²¹ This then was the forerunner of the Council for Social Action, for which the initiative came largely from another outstanding Chicago Congregationalist, Dr. Arthur E. Holt.

A further correlation of all denominational work in the state was effected by the "Chicago Congregational Commission," composed of nine members elected by the Association and the same number elected by the Missionary and Extension Society. A commission of this kind had been suggested by the Congregational Club in 1909, but the suggestion then was not acted upon. Among other services which the body rendered was the leadership it provided in the organization of the Union Theological College, which, after the removal of the Chicago Theological Seminary, in 1915, to the immediate neighborhood of the University of Chicago, undertook to carry on the undergraduate work which the Seminary could no longer sponsor. At first, the Seminary tried to provide for this need. For recognizing the importance of the training of the undergraduate or non-college men already in the ministry, the Triennial Convention on May 11, 1915, decided to maintain an institute for the training of English speaking pastors in connection with the foreign institutes. A new professor was to be engaged who was to devote the whole of his time to the new institute,

of which the dean of the Seminary, Dr. Frank G. Ward, was to be the director. But the working of the plan was found cumbersome and impracticable, and it was given up at the end of the first year.

In anticipation of this removal, and the consequent stranding of the Institutes' students who were unable to enter the Seminary, it was voted at a joint meeting of the Executive Committee of the Seminary and of the Chicago Congregational Commission, to proceed to organize a new school, which later became Union Theological College. For the period of a seminary course and the care of its students, the Chicago Seminary pledged to the new school the free use of its Fisk Hall and a sum of money to be applied on the faculty expense during the ensuing three years. Later the College purchased all the seminary buildings for the sum of one hundred thousand dollars.

Union Theological College was organized in 1916 with the Reverend W. E. Barton as president and the Reverend C. A. Osborne as secretary of its Board of Directors. This Board included a Baptist, Dean Shailer Mathews; a Disciple, Dr. Herbert L. Willett, both of the University of Chicago; a Presbyterian, Dr. Chalmers Covert; and a Methodist from the Garrett Institute who, however, never served. Dr. Mathews and Dr. Willett were for a long time influential members of the Board. Reverend James A. Jenkins was elected Dean and Reverend C. A. Osborne, Executive Secretary. The curriculum provided for a four year course majoring in theology, and leading to a Th.B. degree. There was also a Junior College curriculum for foreign students not able to complete the regular course.²²

The removal of the Seminary to the campus of the University and its affiliation with the Divinity School, had had a long antecedent history. As far back as 1902 a resolution had been adopted at the meeting of the General Association

inviting the Andover Theological Seminary (which was contemplating a change of its location or affiliation with another institution) to consider "uniting its forces with those of the Chicago Theological Seminary, to aid in forming that Theological University which the wants of this section of the country so imperatively demand. When the institution at Andover was founded . . . it was at what was then the center of Congregationalism. Today that center is not far from Chicago."²³ But nothing came of this proposal.

During President George's administration, the University of Chicago took the initiative in proposing an affiliation with the Seminary. President Harper of the University had long planned to gather around that great institution a group of theological schools and had intended to induce the Chicago Theological Seminary to be the first. The choice was primarily motivated by the preference shown by Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, who had originally been a Congregationalist, to begin the affiliation scheme with the Chicago Seminary. The general basis of the negotiations (as reported verbally by President George to President Davis) was "that if the Seminary would move to the University, new buildings for its work would be provided sufficient to take care of it in all its departments, the old buildings were to be turned over to the University and it was understood that the Seminary and the Divinity School would probably carry on its undergraduate and foreign speaking work on the West Side."²⁴ The negotiations were progressing favorably until the controversy inaugurated by Washington Gladden over "tainted money," which had arisen in connection with Mr. Rockefeller's gift to the American Board, brought the whole matter to an abrupt termination. The offer was never renewed.

Nevertheless, the University was not willing to drop the matter altogether. Professor Herbert L. Willett, in behalf of President Harper, continued the negotiations during 1906.

But the notoriety which attended the publication—in that same year—of Professor George B. Foster's book, *The Finality of the Christian Religion*, promptly terminated the negotiations.²⁵

A new and important era, full of revolutionary changes, opened for the Seminary with the inauguration of its third president, Dr. Ozora Stearns Davis. He assumed the office in 1909, and found the situation discouraging. The graduation class of 1908 comprised just four students (not including the graduates of the Institutes), and two of these had taken only a "partial" course. Moreover, a tragedy overtook the Faculty when Professor Hugh M. Scott, one of the strongest members of the teaching body, was crushed between street cars. A few years later, Professor Ralph Hall Ferris, a recent addition to the Faculty, developed tuberculosis, and Professor Edward T. Harper found it necessary to tender his resignation. Thus President Davis had to build almost a new Faculty, and it was at this time that Dr. Frank G. Ward, Dr. Henry H. Walker, and Dr. Benjamin W. Robinson were added.

But it became increasingly clear that if the Seminary were to retain the rank of a graduate school, it must make a change. The Faculty and Trustees became convinced that it was essential for the best interests of the Seminary if it affiliated with a school of such high scholastic standing, particularly as regards the postgraduate studies, as was the University of Chicago. Since such a proposal met with serious opposition, particularly of the editor of *The Advance*, Dr. J. A. Adams, for a time other possibilities were considered, such as an affiliation with the Garrett Biblical Institute in Evanston. But in the end, the advantages offered by the University of Chicago convinced the Board that the choice of it was the best. The negotiations with the University authorities having resulted in the drawing up of a mutually satisfactory Memorandum of Agreement, the Board at last voted, on May 5, 1914, to embark upon the daring venture of faith. Thereupon, during

the summer of 1915, the Seminary removed its "*lares et penates*," including a portion of the Plymouth Rock, to the University campus. At first the office of the institution was located in a single room of the Haskell Oriental Museum, the library likewise being housed in another single room of the building. The students were accommodated in the Divinity Halls opposite the Museum. But later, when the colonial residence at 5757 University Avenue was purchased, the administrative offices and the library were transferred there; the building also served as dormitory for a fairly large number of students. However, Haskell Museum continued to provide lecture rooms. Later, other contiguous property was acquired and made the building of the Seminary's new home possible. But it was not until 1923 that the foundations of the present Seminary dormitory were laid, and 1926-27 that the administrative unit was erected. The first of the new buildings was the lovely Thorndyke Hilton Memorial Chapel.

In 1917 the United States was drawn into the World War then raging, and this circumstance confronted the churches of the country with the perennial problem of the Christian attitude toward war. It is a prevailing fashion in our day to affirm dogmatically and categorically that the churches of the land during that time "presented arms." But such an undiscriminating opinion finds little support in fact. Indeed, reviewing the evidence as far as Congregationalism is concerned, one finds vigorous defense of pacifism and equally able defense of the traditional Christian attitude toward war in about the same proportion as in our day. At the General Council of 1916, Dr. Charles F. Aked, then pastor of the First Church of San Francisco, California, and later the leader of Henry Ford's "*Peace Ship*" expedition which attracted nationwide attention,²⁶ presented a strong case for pacifism. But the speaker who followed him, Dr. George A. Gordon of the Old South Church, Boston, voiced a firm dissent from

Dr. Aked's views.²⁷ Such expression of opinion on both sides of the question continued to appear in our denominational press, prominent members of our fellowship being found in both camps as they are today.²⁸

We are fortunate in possessing an interesting questionnaire which gives us first hand information on the attitude of our Congregational ministry toward the war.²⁹ The section dealing with Illinois comprises seventy-two replies received to about 300 questionnaires sent out. On the whole, the responses are disappointing to one who is searching for some unusual display of fervent nationalism or of hatred of the enemy, as one is led to expect by the present-day opinions as to the temper of the church during the first war. The majority of the churches (although it is mostly the small, country churches which are represented, the ministers of the large city churches apparently ignoring the questionnaire) carried on their work just about as usual. The replies to the inquiry regarding the pastor's "utterances concerning our attitude toward the foe" are, in most instances, left unanswered, while many others are couched in terms expressive of mercy, forgiveness, charity, and justice: "if thy enemy hunger, feed him"; "pray for the enemy." Only in a relatively few cases is the answer sterner: "strict justice without hatred or revenge"; "spirit of justice tempered by mercy"; "no sentimental, forgiving attitude; stern justice." Furthermore, during 1917 and 1918 the Conference passed resolutions supporting the President of the United States and recording "their solemn conviction of the righteousness of the cause which our nation has espoused," and pledging "our hearty support and earnest prayers."³⁰ The Conference likewise went on record in support of prohibition as a war measure.

It was during this period that the Chicago Association, then the largest in the country, with more students applying for licensure and more ministers seeking transfers than any-

where else, originated the so-called "junior ordination" licensure which is likely to be adopted by other Congregational associations as well. In 1916, on the recommendation of the Registrar, the Reverend Cyrus A. Osborne, a resolution was adopted which granted the licentiates of the Association the right to perform all ministerial functions, including the marriage ceremonies, the administration of sacraments, etc., but limiting the powers thus conferred to the area of the Association, and for the period of one year. Licentiates were placed under the care of the Advisory Board of the Association, and their license might be withdrawn for cause. These measures were adopted to discourage the ordination of men before they had finished their full theological training. This seems a better solution of the vexed problem than the one proposed by the Commission on the Ministry of the Berkeley National Council of 1940, which suggested the method of "limited ordination."³¹

Another successful innovation inaugurated by the Chicago Association gave the local associations the right to examine the credentials presented by ministers seeking a transfer from one association to another. The rule that "every association is the judge of its own members" and may decline to accept the credentials of an applicant if it deems them insufficient or below standard, was adopted in 1930 by the whole Illinois Conference. This principle tends to lift the standards of ministerial standing throughout the state.

The changing conditions of the post-war period were reflected in adjustments which indicated that not all associations in the state were in a healthy condition. The Central Association had long experienced difficulties which suggested the advisability either of joining forces with another association or disbanding. The matter was discussed ever since 1905 when a resolution was presented proposing a merger of the Central with the Central East Association. But the motion

was defeated in the next meeting, and a similar fate overtook the motions made in 1907 and 1911; it was not until the meeting held on November 4, 1919, that it was resolved "that Central Association shall disband its organization at the Spring session of 1920."³² The meeting referred to was held on March 8, 1920, and although all other steps in connection with disbanding the Association were taken, no formal and definitive resolution actually disbanding the body is recorded. The Bureau Association likewise gradually came to the conclusion that its work would be rendered more efficient if it joined forces with the Rock River Association. This step was taken at the meeting held at Kewanee on November 4, 1925, and the resulting body assumed the name of Bureau-Rock River Association.³³

During the post-war period the denomination shared with the rest of the country all the hardships of economic dislocation and misery which the era of depression entailed. The work of the Conference experienced a sharp slump and many of the plans adopted at the time of reorganization in 1910-1911 were badly damaged or wrecked altogether. The leadership in the office of state superintendent changed frequently. Superintendent McCollum resigned in 1920 because he had accepted the secretaryship of the Church Building Society. The state evangelist, the Reverend Walter Spooner, became acting superintendent, and held that post until 1922, when the Reverend Charles C. Merrill, D.D., was elected. Thereafter, Mr. Spooner served as assistant superintendent. Dr. Merrill's term of office spanned almost five years, for he resigned on December 31, 1926, to become Secretary of the Commission on Missions of the Congregational Churches. Summarizing the accomplishments of the period he pointed to two outstanding developments: the Pilgrim Foundation at the University of Illinois and the Tower Hill Camp. The credit for the progress in the first-named project went to Dr. Robert J.

Locke, Dr. Robert W. Gammon, and the Reverend Walter Spooner. "They are the ones who pulled the laboring oar and they have pulled it strongly and well," he declared. The Tower Hill Project was initiated by Dr. Gammon and developed by a number of other devoted workers.³⁴

Acting on "a very strong sentiment in favor of picking a man from the state," the Board of Directors nominated to the vacant position the Reverend Robert J. Locke, D.D., of Champaign, Illinois, who was "the one man in the state generally considered for the position."³⁵ His term was to begin on March 1, 1927. It unfortunately coincided with the beginning of the acute depression period which wrought such a serious havoc with the Illinois churches that in the end it necessitated the reorganization of the state work. Dr. Locke bravely faced the financial disaster which cut down the income of the Conference to a level where it was imperative to apply drastic remedies.

The financial depression was exceedingly severe and crippled the work of the Conference appreciably. In 1931, the Conference Treasurer of Benevolences, Mr. John H. Finley, described the effect as follows:

The year has been an exceptionally difficult one to raise money for any cause. Many of our churches report losses through bank failures. We never knew how many Congregationally-owned banks there were until it was too late to benefit by the knowledge. . . .

The falling off in receipts is largely in our larger churches, as would be expected in a time of industrial and financial depression, but more especially now in a time of fear. Many of these churches in more favorable times have borrowed the money to pay benevolences, and made up the difference in the early months of the new year, but this year no church or member of a church seems able or willing to risk borrowing on future hopes. . . .

Our rural constituency has gone, financially, from bad last year to worse this year, as all prices for their produce

are ruinous. Notwithstanding all this, in response to the call of the needy in our cities, they are helping nobly. One small church sent in three tons of provisions, and another a ton and a half, and others have done more or less.³⁶

The magnitude of the effect of the depression upon our churches may be gauged by a statistical comparison for the period 1910-1935. Home expenses of Illinois Congregational churches which in 1909/1910 were \$736,816, reached the staggering total of \$2,308,785 for the year 1927/1928, but slumped to \$953,731 in 1935/1936, even though the latter figure includes the Christian denomination which had consolidated with our churches in 1931. Even more startling changes were registered in the benevolent giving which in 1909/1910 were \$237,361, reached the peak of \$563,012 in the year 1924/1925, but fell to \$126,728 in 1934/1935, less than a half of the 1909/1910 figure.

It was in the face of such acute necessity that desperate measures had to be adopted to cope with it. The income of the Conference fell sharply, to a point where the work could not be carried on with the force then employed. The associate superintendent Spooner resigned on February 28, 1931, in order to become superintendent of the Middle Atlantic Conference of Congregational Churches. He was succeeded by the Reverend Frederick W. Raymond. Then the Board of Trustees drastically reduced the salaries of the superintendent and the assistant superintendent. But even this proved insufficient, and in the meeting of November 6, 1933, Dr. Locke and Mr. Raymond tendered their resignations, to take effect on December 31. The resignations were accepted with regrets, and as a measure of necessity. Since under the prevailing conditions no thought of filling the superintendency could be entertained, the matter of the future organization of the Conference caused a considerable anxiety. The Executive Committee decided that the vacated positions could not

be filled for a period of two years—1934 and 1935—and that the administration of the Conference must be conducted by an Operating Committee composed of ministers who would voluntarily contribute their services in this emergency. Mr. Finley was retained in the full-time employ of the Conference, but in the capacity of office manager under the direction of the Operating Committee, of which Dr. Walter A. Morgan, pastor of the New First Congregational Church, Chicago, was chairman. Dr. Gammon acted as a voluntary advisor to the churches and ministers of the Conference.

Another important development which took place during the period under consideration was the close co-ordination of the Chicago Association with the work of the Chicago Missionary and Extension Society. Although this, too, was partly a result of the depression, the more important cause is to be seen in the large bequest received by the latter organization in 1925 under the will of Mr. Victor Fremont Lawson, owner and publisher of *The Chicago Daily News*, and a faithful member of the New England Congregational Church. It amounted to a cool four million dollars, which, as a certain witty minister remarked, did not remain cool but soon became frozen. Besides, Mr. Lawson made a bequest to the Chicago Theological Seminary; these two bequests represent probably the largest single gift ever made to the denomination by any one person. As the result of this magnificent increase of its financial resources, the Society was able greatly to expand its work and to assume new responsibilities just at the time when, owing to the depression, the Conference and the Chicago Association were experiencing severe losses. Consequently, in 1929 an effort was made by the City Society to secure a federation with the Chicago Association, on the general basis of the Congregational Union of Cleveland, Ohio. But because of the opposition to this plan on the part of the Association, the negotiations were finally abandoned. Moreover, in the

opinion of the attorneys of the Society, such a merger was not legally possible on account of the terms of the Lawson bequest, and of the provisions of the Illinois law governing incorporated bodies.

Nevertheless, a considerable measure of organic co-operation was in the end achieved; for although the two organizations remained separate, a close relationship was worked out in 1930, when both adopted new Constitutions redefining the functions of each. The City Society, which later changed its name to the Chicago Congregational Union, defined its relations to the Chicago Association in the identical language employed in the revised (1930) Constitution of that body. The most pertinent sections read as follows:

1. identical voting membership of both organizations, except that the life members of the Union retain their voting privileges.

2. the nominating committee of the Association acts for the Union, although one third of the members of the committee must be chosen from among the directors of the Union.

3. the Moderator of the Association and the Superintendent of the State Conference are *ex-officio* members of the Board of the Union, while the General Director and the Associate Director of the Union are *ex-officio* members of the Advisory Board of the Association.

4. the Association retains control of all the ecclesiastical relations of the churches in its membership, as well as its historic relation to the State Conference.

5. but the Union "is the officially designated agency of the Congregational churches within the area . . . for the services hereinafter enumerated and for the securing of funds for the work under its care." These services comprise counsel regarding strategy, religious education, young people's work, assistance to building operations or aid to special projects of self-supporting churches, aid to churches not able to carry on

their own work, establishment of new churches, and similar functions.³⁷

Another important development which took place during this period was the merger with the churches of the Christian denomination, which added to our constituency eighty-one churches with a constituency of 5,620. The bulk of these predominantly small, rural churches is concentrated in southern Illinois. But since this matter has been treated in Chapter VIII, no extensive mention is necessary in this connection.

Another casualty of the period of depression was the Union Theological College, which was forced, in consequence of financial difficulties, to close its doors in 1934. During its existence since 1916, it had performed a good and useful task in training for their ministerial duties men who by reason of inadequate academic preparation could not gain admittance into post-graduate institutions, 90% of them being already in the ministry. The examiner for the year 1919 reported the progress of the school as follows:

Union Theological College has already passed the experimental stage and has demonstrated its fitness to exist by the students whom it has attracted to its halls. . . In 1917-18 the enrollment has increased to forty regular students besides sixteen others who were taking special or partial courses. During the past year . . . the enrollment . . . was quite equal to that of the preceding year.³⁸

But the financial support it could secure from the churches proved quite inadequate, so that the trustees were forced to contract a fairly heavy debt. In 1926 the "Committee of Seven on Chicago Congregational Educational Institutions," appointed by the State Conference to study the schools which appealed for support to the churches, brought in a report adverse to the College. It asserted "that there is a grave question as to whether the Union Theological College ought longer to continue as a separate institution." In support of

this judgment, it cited the reasons that there is no longer an acute shortage of ministers: that the rural fields needed strong, specially trained men; that a better arrangement for the training of such men could be worked out by the Chicago Theological Seminary in conjunction with the University of Chicago. On the basis of such considerations, the Committee recommended "That beginning with the academic year of 1927-28, Union Theological College be discontinued and its work be taken over by Chicago Theological Seminary and by the Colleges of Congregational affiliations in the Middle West."³⁹

To this report Dean Osborne made a reply in five points, some of which are here summarized:

1. No member of this committee of seven has ever visited a class in the College or has personally studied its operation. On the contrary, the committee did appoint a small committee of specialists, with Dr. Albert W. Palmer as chairman, all of whom visited the institution and its classes, studied its curriculum, and rendered a report favorable to its continuance.

2. No institution in Congregational history has been so fully authenticated by our denominational authorities as this College. It was organized at the desire of the Seminary and the Congregational Commission to meet a definite need. It was fully investigated by a Committee of Twenty-Eight, appointed by Secretary Sheldon of the Congregational Education Society, and only on its approval was given financial support by the Education Society. It was later fully investigated on the ground and in its classes by a commission of the National Council, of which Dr. Cornelius Patton was chairman, and was given a clear track to go ahead.

3. The College did not take students who could or would go to an academic college or to a graduate seminary. It was not in competition with either of these but solely with

the Moody Bible Institute, eighteen of whose students or graduates were pastors of Chicago Congregational churches when the College was getting under way. Ninety per cent of its English students were already in the ministry before coming to the College, and were unable to complete their training in any other standard institution. At the time of the report, seventeen of our Illinois churches have had successful pastors who were students or graduates of the College which was patently lifting the standard of the Congregational ministry in Illinois.

4. It was not a wildcat institution but was built on the same basis as the Congregational College at Nottingham, England, which was also the program followed by Gordon Bible College in Boston, organized the same year as Union Theological College. It was thoroughly scholarly in its methods. Every one of its directors and professors is a college graduate and loyal to the highest demands of Christian education.

5. It had been receiving foreign students from Europe and elsewhere, for whom there was no other provision. Aside from one small Lutheran institution, it was the only place in America where Finnish students could secure training for our ministry.

After four members of the committee and two officers of the College had spoken, the Conference of Illinois voted against the recommendation of the Committee and for the continuance of the College, by a vote of 92 to 47.

It is interesting to note that in 1929, three years later, the Congregational Foundation for Education, which was asked to help finance the College, suggested that Dr. Robert L. Kelly of New York be asked to make a survey of the institution. At its own expense the College had such a survey made; it was carried out under Dr. Kelly's direction by Dr. Ora Delmar Foster, an assistant whom Dr. Kelly pronounced "the foremost authority in America on theological schools." Space does

not permit lengthy quotations, but in the interest of some future program of education it should be said that Dr. Foster made both a sweeping and personal investigation of the plant and operation of the College, and in an extended report came to the conclusion that, "We have seen the denominational need to be so great for the service to be rendered by a high grade College like Union, that it becomes a national denominational obligation to give it all the support it needs, both moral and financial."

Dr. Kelly, Executive Secretary of the Council of Church Boards of Education, and Secretary of the Association of American Colleges, made a careful study of Dr. Foster's survey and commented at length upon it; among other pronouncements he made the following: "There appears to be an urgent demand for such institutions as Union Theological College aspires to become, and under favorable conditions such institutions could render a most valuable service." And "It is perfectly evident to me that U. T. C. is in no sense a competitor of either the colleges affiliated with the Congregational churches or Chicago Theological Seminary, or any other theological seminary conducted on a graduate basis."

Union Theological College was closed by its officers when the financial stress of the thirties made further effort to raise funds an impossible task. Its professors continued without salaries for about two years or until June, 1934.⁴⁰

Since the Congregational polity is of the kind which guarantees its upholders to make their own mistakes and offers them the opportunity to learn from them, if they are wise enough to avail themselves of it, it may not be amiss to mention probably the most instructive case, judicially speaking, ever dealt with by the Chicago Association—the case of Dr. Frank Dyer.⁴¹ The Los Angeles Association, of which he had been a member, had voted on June 7, 1928, by a vote of 107 to 1 upon charges duly and regularly preferred, to with-

draw fellowship from him, and thus had terminated his ministerial standing and character. In October, 1929, Dr. Dyer wrote the Registrar of the Chicago Association requesting that he be received into the membership of that body. The Advisory Board instructed the Registrar to inform Dr. Dyer that, aside from reasons of comity, the Association could not receive anyone not a member of a Congregational church within the bounds of the Association. In 1930, the request was renewed with a similar result. But later Dr. Dyer moved to Chicago, became a member of the Ravenswood Church, and called a "Council of Appeal" representative of national membership. The Council met on February 3 and 4, 1932, and agreed that the Los Angeles Association had erred in procedure, by disfellowshipping Dr. Dyer in his absence. He had been duly notified, and admitted that he had received the notice, but did not attend. Thereupon, the Council proceeded to vote that he should "be restored to the status which he had held four years before," without considering any charges against him, although the Letter Missive specified that the Council was called not only to review the proceedings of the Los Angeles Association, but also "to hear any other charges which have been duly presented, to consider his subsequent actions and service, and also to hear Dr. Dyer in reference to the above and to determine whether . . . he should be restored to the Congregational Ministry." The Registrar, the Reverend Mr. Osborne, warned the Council that the restoration of Dr. Dyer's status without a consideration of the charges would nullify its judicial character. Nevertheless, the vote restoring Dr. Dyer to the ministry was carried by a very large majority.

Thereupon, on March 10, 1932, Dr. Dyer once more applied for membership in the Chicago Association, which appointed a committee, consisting of Drs. Palmer, Guthrie, and Locke, to "canvass his (Dr. Dyer's) whole record, consider

the bearing of the Ravenswood Council on the actions of the Los Angeles Association," and report to the Advisory Board. The committee, without reporting on the charges made in the court action and decision in the Wilshire Boulevard Church case, recommended to the Advisory Board that Dr. Dyer be received into the membership of the Chicago Association, with the statement that "if he were proposing to go back to southern California seeking to operate there under our credentials and in defiance of the Los Angeles Association, we should not make this recommendation." The Advisory Board adopted the recommendation by a vote of nine to eight, and later the Association itself voted favorably. Dr. Dyer, however, did move to southern California and did seek ministerial employment within the bounds of the Los Angeles Association.

During the interregnum after Dr. Locke's resignation, the chief problem confronting the denomination was that of devising a new kind of Conference organization which would answer the needs of the times. At the meeting of the Conference of May 8, 1935, a resolution was passed "that a Strategy Committee be appointed to study the needs of the churches of the state . . . and to report on or before January, 1936, to the Board of Trustees, who shall in turn report to the State Conference."⁴² Reverend Niel E. Hansen, then pastor of the First Congregational Church of Galesburg, was appointed chairman. This important committee utilized the factual research and survey of the situation in the state prepared by Professors Holt and Kincheloe, and based its recommendations upon the deductions from this objective study. After a strenuous and arduous study of the entire situation, it reported first to the Board of Trustees, and later at the annual meeting of the Conference at Glen Ellyn, on May 5, 1936. Their recommendations may be summarized as follows:

In the first place, the committee proposed that the office of superintendent be abolished, and that in its place there be elected regional directors. The Conference was to be divided into three areas—the Chicago, the Northern, and the Southern—all to have equal status. Each area was to have an equal number of members on the Board of Trustees of the Conference. The Executive Committee of the Board was then to “be charged with full responsibility for the general administration of the Conference between meetings of the Trustees.” The areas themselves were to be administered by three directors: but the provision for the appointment of the Chicago Area director was unusual, insofar as this office was to be held by the General Director of the Chicago Congregational Union in accordance with the supposedly existing arrangement between the Union and the Association.

Besides the three directors, a central office of the Conference was to be maintained in Chicago, under the management of the Secretary of the Conference. This functionary is to care for such business as is necessary for the administration of Illinois as a Conference of churches and for other technical duties.

This most radical reorganization of the work of the Conference was adopted by the meeting of this body at Glen Ellyn in 1936, and its provisions were carried out accordingly. Dr. Ernest Graham Guthrie, General Director of the Chicago Congregational Union, accordingly became the Director of the area, and after his retirement in 1942, was followed in this office by Dr. Niel E. Hansen; the Northern area elected the Reverend R. Ernest Akin for its director, and after his resignation in 1942 the Reverend Glen Lindley; while the Southern area chose, in 1937, Dr. W. C. Giersbach, and after his resignation in 1940, the Reverend Walter Schlaretzki. Mr. John H. Finley was elected secretary of the Conference and was succeeded, after his resignation in 1939, by Mr. Orman

L. Shott. It is under this arrangement that the work of the Conference has been conducted ever since.

The Lawson bequest, which so radically changed the fortunes of the Chicago Missionary and Extension Society, had an equally decisive effect upon the Chicago Theological Seminary, which was likewise one of the beneficiaries. Mr. Lawson was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Seminary, but never as much as intimated that he contemplated making the Seminary the beneficiary of a large bequest. While the campaign for the erection of the present administration half of the Seminary buildings (including Graham Taylor Hall) was in progress, Mr. Lawson had died before President Davis was able to approach him for a contribution toward the building project. What was Dr. Davis' surprise, however, when after the will had been probated he discovered for the first time that the Seminary was given such a magnificent bequest as no one hitherto had even dreamed of! Accordingly, the year 1925 marks a new era in the history of that institution, then some seventy years old. The building plan could then be enlarged to meet a greatly expanded plan of work which was undertaken.

As the result, the next year the Faculty was doubled by the addition of five new members and the Seminary inaugurated new lines of theological work and other pioneering ventures. In 1927 the Congregational Training School for Women, which had existed in close proximity to the Seminary ever since its founding in 1901, and to the teaching program of which some of the Seminary professors had always contributed, was merged with the Seminary. It became the women's department of the Seminary, but was raised to the post-graduate level on a par with the rest of the institution.

The administration of President Ozora S. Davis, under whom the Seminary experienced the greatest changes in all its history, was terminated by his resignation, in June, 1929,

on account of ill health. He died two years afterwards. During his term of office, the momentous decisions to remove the Seminary to the vicinity of the University campus and to enter into a close affiliation with the Divinity School of the University of Chicago were taken; the present buildings were built and most of the property located near the campus was acquired; the Lawson bequest made possible not only the enlargement of the building program, but an unprecedented expansion of the academic curriculum and other scholastic activities which in turn greatly increased the student body and raised the Seminary to a high rank among the theological schools of the country.

After Dr. Davis' death, Dr. Albert W. Palmer, then pastor of the First Church of Oak Park, was elected to the presidency, and holds that office to the present time. The most important event of his administration was the negotiation, initiated by the Divinity School of the University, of a closer federation of the academic work of the Seminary, whereby the full-time members of the Seminary Faculty became members of the Faculty of the University of Chicago in a teaching pool. The federation of the faculties did not affect the financial independence, ecclesiastical relations, or self-government of the respective institutions. On the basis of the new arrangements, approximately two-thirds of the curriculum comprises a "common core" of courses which all students of the federated institutions must take. The remaining one-third is controlled by each institution. This move created the largest theological faculty in the country, with resources probably unequalled elsewhere.

The period prior to the American entry into the World War II was marked by a tendency toward pacifism, which had been assiduously fostered since the last war by such organizations as the Fellowship of Reconciliation and other groups. Whether the emphases with which those groups

identified themselves actually represented a greatly increased sensitiveness in regard to the Christian attitude toward war remains to be seen. But prior to the Pearl Harbor, the movement made itself heard in no uncertain terms. The temper of the American churches has been reflected in Illinois Congregationalism where the Conference, beginning in 1934, adopted a number of resolutions of a strongly pacifist character. In 1934, President Palmer fathered a resolution "to repudiate aggressive war" and called for a refusal "to cross another nation's boundary to kill and destroy."⁴³ In another resolution, the Conference appealed to our churches "to refuse to sanction, bless or participate in any future war in which our government, despite the Peace Pact, may become involved." The pacifist dominance was likewise obvious in the resolutions of 1935 and 1936; in the latter year, a resolution was adopted deploring "the increase, in the past two years, of 75% in current expenditures for the Army and Navy . . . as a wholly unexplained scale of national defense. . . ."⁴⁴ The next year, a protest is registered against the conferring upon the President of the United States "absolute dictatorial power" to conscript man-power and "suppress freedom of speech and press."⁴⁵ This period of the pacifist resolutions was capped in 1939 by the proposal that the Illinois Conference call upon "all in position of influence and authority to secure the calling of a World Conference under Christian auspices, to consider causes of war and make specific recommendations for the removal of such causes."⁴⁶ Even as late as 1941, a few months before the Pearl Harbor, the Conference could not find sufficient majority for the passage of a resolution "that we give our approval to the effort being made by our national government to support Britain and those who with her bear the brunt of the exhausting opposition to the forces of tyranny."⁴⁷ The motion was in the end tabled, because it was deemed inadvisable to engage in a fruitless debate. The Conference, however, voted

that a printed copy of an address made by Dr. T. F. Rutledge Beale be sent to every minister in the state. This able address pointed out that the Church is confronting a "terrible dilemma with tremendous dangers both ways. On the one hand the church may become merely the instrument of selfish reactionary or subversive groups. On the other it may become the appendage, or merely the morale department of the State. Some Christians will weigh these issues carefully and try to choose intelligently the least dangerous path. Others will make their choice . . . driven by a deep inner compulsion, according to their understanding of the laws, principles, and needs of the moral order."⁴⁸

Although the formal resolutions actually passed by the Conference might lead one to the conclusion that the membership was by and large pacifist, such a judgment would not necessarily be accurate. The seeming predominance of pacifism might have been due principally to the aggressive and militant spirit and the adroit generalship of a well organized and highly vocal group who knew how to assert their views. There were strong men on both sides of this question, at this time as well as on earlier occasions. If one may be permitted to judge on the basis of the vote regarding the church's attitude toward war taken at the Durham National Council in 1942, it would appear that the proportion of non-pacifists to pacifists in our fellowship is about two to one. Accordingly, it would seem safe to assert that in Illinois the situation probably is not very different. Moreover, perhaps the entry of the United States into the global struggle has removed the question of pacifism from the realm of the abstract into that of concrete facing of problems presented by the actual world in which we live. There is no reason to doubt that our fellowship will discharge its obligations to the state as well as the other Christian communions of the historically non-pacifist tradition.

* * * *

This concludes our survey of the century and more of

Congregationalism in Illinois. That story depicts the marvelous accomplishments and the inspiring epic of the settlement of the West. It exhibits the common characteristics of the brave and courageous populace which faced the hardships and rigors of the pioneer life with fortitude and determination, to which our missionaries contributed the moral stamina and religious foundations. From a mere handful of rural churches which a century ago formed themselves into a General Association, there has grown a fellowship which both in the state and beyond its borders has been exercising a far-flung and potent influence. Within our denomination, Illinois Congregationalism has played an important, on some occasions a leading part. On our rolls are inscribed many honored names, eminent in religious, cultural, and civic life. As we look back upon the past hundred years, we are reminded of the words of the Lord: "I sent you to reap that whereon ye have not labored; others have labored, and ye are entered into their labor." As we stand on the threshold of the second century of our existence as the Congregational Conference of Illinois, may God grant that our influence in the new and better world order may ever increase!

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

- 1 "An Act for Dividing the Indiana territory into two separate governments," February 3, 1809, *Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*, XIII: *Illinois Constitutions*, Emil Joseph Verlie, ed. (Springfield, 1919), 12-14.
- 2 The Census of 1810 credited the Territory of Illinois with a population of 12,282 (not including perhaps 18,000 Indians). See John Moses, *Illinois Historical and Statistical* (2nd ed., Chicago, 1895), I, 230. Settlements had been made in fertile, wooded sections along the great rivers—the Wabash, the Ohio, and the Mississippi—and in regions near the mouths of the Kaskaskia and the Illinois. Vincennes, on the east, and St. Louis, on the west, were outposts of civilization. Shawneetown, the port of entry from the Wabash-Ohio system and the rivers of the southland, and Kaskaskia, the seat of government, situated near the confluence of the Kaskaskia and the Mississippi, were the foci of population. In 1812, when Illinois became a territory of the second grade, Governor Ninian Edwards convened the legislature, elections were held, and the people gained a representative in Congress. A few forts, garrisoned by United States troops, held out some hope of protecting the trade and of defending the lives of the settlers against the Indians. Arthur C. Boggess, *The Settlement of Illinois, 1778-1830* (Chicago, 1908), chapter iv; and Clarence W. Alvord, *Centennial History of Illinois, I: The Illinois Country, 1673-1818* (Springfield, 1920), 440-441.
- 3 This situation is well described by Oliver W. Elsbree, *The Rise of the Missionary Spirit in America, 1790-1815* (Williamsport, Pa., 1928), chapters ii-iii.
- 4 There Samuel J. Mills, James Richards, Francis L. Robbins, Harvey Loomis, and Byram Green organized a secret society known as "The Brethren" which met regularly for prayers. See the *Proceedings of the Missionary Jubilee held at Williams College, August 5, 1856* (Boston, 1856), 12-13; cf. *The One Hundredth Anniversary of the Haystack Prayer Meeting, celebrated at the Ninety Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Board in North Adams, and by the Haystack Centennial Meetings at Williamstown, Mass., October 9-12, 1906.* (Boston, 1907), 3-4.
- 5 *Memoirs of American Missionaries, formerly connected with the Society of Inquiry respecting Missions, in the Andover Theological Seminary, embracing a history of the Society, etc.* (Boston, 1833), 13-14.
- 6 The best account of Mills is that by Thomas C. Richards in his

- volume, *Samuel J. Mills, Missionary, Pathfinder, and Promoter* (Boston, 1906).
- 7 The New England missionary societies featured their letters in their periodicals, the *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine and Religious Intelligencer*, and the *Panoplist and Missionary Magazine*. These reports were republished under the title, *A Correct View of that part of the United States which lies west of the Allegany Mountains, with regard to religion and morals* (Hartford, Conn., 1814).
 - 8 *Memoirs of American Missionaries*, 353; *General Catalog of the Theological Seminary, Andover, Massachusetts, 1808-1908* (Boston, 1909), 39.
 - 9 Richards, *op. cit.*, 129-147. The Massachusetts Missionary Society, the Philadelphia Missionary Society, and the Philadelphia Bible Society made themselves responsible for the second expedition.
 - 10 Two of these were the American Bible Society, formed at New York on May 6, 1816, and the American Colonization Society, formed at Washington on December 27, 1816. On the first, see Henry Otis Dwight, *The Centennial History of the American Bible Society*, (2 vols., New York, 1916), especially I, 21-24. On the second, see Early Lee Fox, *The American Colonization Society, 1817-1840* (Baltimore, 1919), 9, 42-43, 47.
 - 11 On Giddings, see *Memoirs of American Missionaries*, 350; *General Catalog of the Theological Seminary, Andover, Mass., 1808-1908*, 40; Augustus T. Norton, *History of the Presbyterian Church, in the State of Illinois* (St. Louis, 1879), I, 34-37; Joseph E. Roy, "Salmon Giddings," *New Englander* (July, 1874), 517-532.
 - 12 John E. Kirkpatrick, *Timothy Flint, Pioneer, Missionary, Author, Editor* (Cleveland, 1911).
 - 13 The number of churches which Giddings organized is differently reported. Norton (*op. cit.*, 38) gives thirteen, Carrie P. Kofoid gives twenty. See her "Puritan Influences in the Formative Years of Illinois History," *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society for the year 1905* (Springfield, 1906), 276.
 - 14 Norton, *op. cit.*, 22, 23, 25, 199-205; cf. William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, II: The Presbyterians* (New York, 1936), 50; *Extracts from the Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1816-1825*, 279.
 - 15 The list of those who served in Illinois under the Missionary Society of Connecticut reads like an Andover catalog. Among the students and graduates of this institution who performed this work were Samuel J. Mills, Salmon Giddings, Daniel G. Sprague, Oren Catlin, Daniel Gould, Edward Hollister, David C. Proctor, and Elbridge Gerry Howe. Others who worked for this Society in the early period of its activity in Illinois, though not from Andover, included Timothy Flint, Jesse Townsend, Orin Fowler, Isaac Reed, Nathaniel B. Derrow, and John Mathews. David Tenney, another Andover man, who worked in Illinois during 1818-1819 for the New York Evangelical Society, died in 1819. By putting forth strenuous exertions, all these men succeeded in

organizing a number of churches, all Presbyterian. Some of these, unfortunately, disappeared after the ministers had left for other regions or had returned to the East to recuperate from their toil and from the climate. Many, however, were long-lived. The number of men in Illinois for the Missionary Society of Connecticut did not in any year rise above two or three, and years passed in which none of its ministers set foot within the boundaries of the state. See the *Annual Narrative of Missions, directed by the Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut* (for successive years 1819-1830).

- 16 The formal basis for jointly conducting home missions by the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists was laid in 1801. In that year, the General Association of Connecticut and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church entered into the Plan of Union. The initiative was taken by the Connecticut body, which sent a committee of three to the meeting of the General Assembly to consider the establishment of "an uniform system of Church Government, between those inhabitants of the new settlements who are attached to the Presbyterian form of church government and those who are attached to the Congregational form," the motives being simply to prevent alienation and the promotion of harmony. The General Assembly appointed a committee of five to negotiate, the chairman of which was the younger Jonathan Edwards, president of Union College at Schenectady, N. Y. The Plan of Union there adopted was unanimously ratified by the General Association of Connecticut one month later. Printed copies of the Plan were given to every missionary working under the Missionary Society of Connecticut and the Assembly's Standing Committee on Missions as reminders of the sanctity of the treaty.

In its essence, the Plan specified united efforts in evangelizing the frontier settlements. Presbyterian churches enjoying the leadership of Congregational ministers, and Congregational churches whose pastors were Presbyterian, were counseled to adjust their relationships to one another in accord with the disciplines of the body to which the ministers or the churches adhered. The Plan implied the formation of associations as well as of presbyteries, though it did not expressly state that they were to be formed. Under the Plan of Union it was possible to form churches composed of Congregationalists and Presbyterians, and these Plan of Union churches, as they came to be called, elected standing committees to hear cases of discipline, the standing committeemen functioning as ruling elders. "Mutual helpfulness" was enjoined on all who formed these churches and conducted their affairs; true, long-range co-operation, not rivalry, was envisioned. And why not? For behind the Plan lay almost a century of experience and precedent.

In 1708, the Synod of Saybrook gave to the Congregational churches of Connecticut a character strongly resembling Presbyterianism. The Saybrook Platform, advocating, to be sure, the characteristic local autonomy of Congregationalism, actually gave greater power into the hands of the clergy, who soon came to dominate the consociations, or county councils of ministers and churches which

this Platform laid down. The consociation became the ultimate court of appeal in matters of doctrine, ordination, installation, and dismission. It was in Congregational life what the presbytery was in Presbyterianism. When the Plan of Union was set in motion, most of the Congregational churches of Connecticut were consociated. Hence they were thought of as either Presbyterian or Congregational.

Another factor which made possible this drawing together of the denominations was the memory of the fellowship which had been engendered by the annual conventions of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia and the General Association of Connecticut, held from 1766 to 1775 inclusive, only the Revolutionary War forcing their discontinuance. Resumed in 1792, when the General Assembly (then four years old) and the General Association of Connecticut exchanged delegates, this movement for approximation reached an important stage in 1795 when the delegates were given the right to vote in the respective councils of these bodies.

By this time, also, many Congregationalists in Connecticut believed that the nurturing of the feeblar churches in isolated regions could be more effectually promoted under Presbyterian, rather than Congregational, procedures. The resulting Plan of Union was reached, therefore, in an open-minded, friendly, hopeful attitude, and secured the approbation of both participants.

Since the other New England Congregational associations came to enjoy various plans of union with the General Assembly (Vermont in 1804, New Hampshire in 1810, Massachusetts in 1811, Maine in 1829, and Rhode Island in 1831), Congregational missionaries coming to the West found it easier to organize Presbyterian, rather than Congregational, churches, and more expedient to erect presbyteries than to form associations. In the course of time this attitude gave rise to the legend that while Congregationalism was suitable to New England, missionary operations in the West must be performed in compliance with Presbyterian usages.

The working of the Plan of Union was greatly to the advantage of the Presbyterians. In New York state, where plans of accommodation were tried, many Congregational churches became Presbyterian, and by 1822 all the Congregational associations had been dissolved. (See R. H. Nichols, "The Plan of Union in New York," *Church History*, V (1936)). In Ohio, Congregational associations disappeared or remained unformed, although many Congregational, as well as Presbyterian, churches were organized. Many mixed churches were formed, operating through the standing committees. As early as 1814, the Congregational ministers on the Western Reserve showed a preference for the erection of presbyteries rather than for associations of churches common in Congregationalism. (See C. L. Zorbaugh, "The Plan of Union in Ohio," *Church History*, VI (1937), 145-174.)

In Indiana, Illinois, and the Michigan Territory, Congregational churches were late in appearing, and when formed, were usually the outcome, or the occasion, of prolonged and bitter contention between

the Presbyterian and the Congregational elements in the community.

The reader is referred to the ample discussion of all these matters in Sweet, *The Presbyterians*, 41-47; W. W. Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier*, III: *The Congregationalists* (Chicago, 1939), 14-20. An engaging treatment is also provided in Atkins and Fagley, *History of American Congregationalism*, (Boston, 1942), 142-148. The text of the Plan of Union is republished as an appendix to that work and also in *The Congregationalists*.

- 17 "It should be remembered that they (that is to say, the Congregationalists working under the Missionary Society of Connecticut) have not prosecuted the work of missions in a denominational spirit. They have not sought to extend their own denomination, but the kingdom of Christ. With the utmost catholicity of feeling they have united with others in the missionary work, content if only Christian churches could be established and maintained, and the destitute have the means of grace supplied." Myron N. Morris, "Historical Discourse delivered at New Haven, November 15, 1876," *Centennial Papers, published by order of the General Conference of the Congregational Churches of Connecticut* (Hartford, 1877), 187.
- 18 *Dictionary of American History*, J. F. Jameson and A. E. McKinley, eds. (Philadelphia, 1931), 784-785.
- 19 The best summary of the Indian question is that given in Boggess, *op. cit.*, chapters iii and v.
- 20 The best studies of the land problems are given by Boggess, *op. cit.*, chapters iii and v; and by Solon J. Buck in his volume, *Illinois in 1818* (Springfield, 1917), chapter ii.
- 21 The account by Roy M. Robbins, *Our Landed Heritage* (Princeton, N. J., 1942), is delightful reading.
- 22 The Military Tract was set apart by Acts of Congress in 1812 and 1816 for the benefit of veterans of the War of 1812, and embraced approximately 3,500,000 acres lying between the Illinois and the Mississippi rivers as far north as the great bend in the Illinois, that is, to 41° 40' n.l. See Nicholas Biddle Van Zandt, *A Full Description of the Soil, Water, Timber, and Prairies of Each Lot, or Quarter Section of the Military Lands between the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers* (Washington City, 1818), 89; cf. S. Augustus Mitchell, *Illinois in 1837* (Philadelphia, 1837), 19-22.
- 23 Gordon A. Riegler, "Aratus Kent, First Presbyterian Minister in Northern Illinois," *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*, XIII (December, 1929).
- 24 Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Rise of the New West, 1819-1829* (New York, 1906), 70, 77; cf. Lois Kimball Mathews, *The Expansion of New England* (Boston, 1909), chapter vii.
- 25 By the provision of Article 6 of the Ordinance of July 13, 1787, "An Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States, Northwest of the River Ohio." See William MacDonald, ed., *Documentary Source Book of American History, 1606-1926* (3rd ed., New York, 1926), 209-216.
- 26 The vote on this crucial issue was 4,972 in the affirmative, and

6,640 in the negative. Overwhelming opposition, rolled up in the seven northern counties of Pike, Fulton, Morgan, Greene, Edgar, Clark, and Sangamon, saved the day. Cf. Boggess, *op. cit.*, 184-185. See also, Theodore C. Pease, *Centennial History of Illinois*, II; *The Frontier State, 1818-1848* (Chicago, 1919), chapter iv.

- 27 "Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Louisiana, with the states which are clustering fast upon our Union, by which a mass of human beings are to be consolidated from the Mississippi to the Pacific, into one scene of life, and duty, and responsibility—all call loudly for the authentic message of peace from the lips of the well-instructed and duly authorized herald of the Cross. Upon that scene of life which the patriot prophet dwells on, the Gospel must triumph, the Christian Prophet expatiate, the Son of God rule, else all that we hold dear for this world, and all we hope for in the next are endangered. The political destiny of our native and loved land are soon to be gathered up from the whole surface of this northern continent; the old states are to be weighed in the balance with their vigorous offspring; the elements of dominion are to rise from universal suffrage from this vast territory—and if we do not endeavour to impregnate the seeds of empire with divine life, if we do not circulate the Gospel in the families which are to expand into this general development, out of a cloud not larger than our hand, may come a mist thick enough to obscure the sun, and a tempest fierce enough to shatter and submerge the precious institutions of our Republic. . . . The Church has an interest in these republican institutions dearer than infidels have confessed. If the Gospel had not been here when they were set up, they could not have existed; nor will they continue to exist if the Gospel do not propagate itself where the precious right of self-government is to be confided to a people." *United Domestic Missionary Society Third Report* (1825), 37-38.
- 28 A letter of Lewis McLeod to Absalom Peters, Dearborn County, Ind., March 13, 1826.
- 29 "Every year serves to *disclose*, if not to *augment*, the spiritual wants of our new settlements. Unless something of a more efficient character, and upon a broader scale, be attempted on behalf of the waste places of Zion, and of our bretheren in the interior, we must expect to see some of the fairest portions of the country become a prey to infidelity and vice. . . . A considerable number of missionary associations have been formed in different places, which have sent into the field many faithful servants of Christ. We have observed these well-timed charities, and seen their cheering results, in the formation of numerous churches, and the revival of pure religion in almost every direction. Still it must be added, that too many of these benevolent exertions have proved desultory and ephemeral; and all have, in some measure, failed of their proper influence, from want of concert among those engaged in the work of missions . . . God forbid that any considerations of interest, any sectarian prejudices, or local jealousy, and, above all, any unfeeling indifference to the circumstances of thousands of our countrymen, without hope, and without God in the world, should close our ears

- and our hearts against the earnest cry from the destitute.”
- 30 *U. D. M. S. First Report* (1823), 12, 15.
- 31 *U. D. M. S. Bulletin*, I. 1 (January, 1823).
- 32 *U. D. M. S. First Report* (1823), 17.
- 33 *U. D. M. S. Bulletin* (January, 1823).
- 34 “What, it may be asked, is to be the fate of these churches, and of the crowd of population rising up in their neighborhood, if young men cannot be obtained who have piety and zeal enough to become their pastors? . . . Is the case already too discouraging for the faith, the zeal, the self-denial, the courage, of those to whom it most urgently appeals? Are ministers the only description of men in the country who esteem it too great a hardship to make their abode in these places? Will those young men, upon whom the richest blessings have been bestowed in their early piety, and a gratuitous education for the ministry, deem the service of these neglected churches too arduous or too obscure for them?” *U. D. M. S. First Report* (1823), 17.
- 35 *U. D. M. S. Fourth Report* (1826), 41.
- 36 A letter of John M. Ellis to Matthias Bruen, Kaskaskia, Ill., December 29, 1825.
- 37 A letter of Elbridge G. Howe to Matthias Bruen, Springfield, Ill., February 11, 1826.
- 38 A letter of Elbridge G. Howe to Absalom Peters, Springfield, Ill., May 23, 1826.
- 39 A letter of Howe to Peters, Paris, Edgar County, Ill., February 28, 1827.
- 40 Nathaniel Bouton, “History of the Origin and Organization of the American Home Missionary Society,” *Home Missionary*, XXXIII (November, 1860), 157-166.
- 41 The standard of the movement to create a national missionary society was raised the day after the ordination of John M. Ellis and others to the Congregational ministry in Old South Church, Boston. A committee, consisting of Professor Ebenezer Porter of Andover Seminary, Rev. Justin Edwards of Andover, Mass., and Rev. Nathaniel W. Taylor of Yale Divinity School, consulted with many others in different parts of the country, and met to deliberate at the house of Mr. Henry Holmes in Boston, January 12, 1826. The following ministers were present for this important conference: William Allen, president of Bowdoin College, Maine; Nathan Lord, Amherst, N. H.; Brown Emerson and Elias Cornelius, Salem, Mass.; Leonard Woods and Ebenezer Porter, Andover Theological Institution; Justin Edwards, Andover; Warren Fay, Charlestown; Sereno E. Dwight and Benjamin B. Wisner, Boston; John Codman, Dorchester; Thaddeus Osgood, Springfield; and Samuel Whittlesey, Hartford, Conn., corresponding secretary of the Connecticut Missionary Society. Letters from others, expressing approbation of the plan, were read, and the Reverend Messrs. Matthias Bruen and Absalom Peters and other officers of the United Domestic Missionary Society, who arrived the following day, signified their acquiescence in the movement. The Executive Committee of the Society

- on March 13, 1826, issued a call for a convention to be held in New York. *U. D. M. S. Fourth Report* (1826), 6-7.
- 41 On Friday evening, May 12, 1826, in the City Hotel, New York City, the United Domestic Missionary Society unanimously approved the resolutions of the convention which recommended that the Society become the American Home Missionary Society. *U. D. M. S. Fourth Report* (1826), 12-17.
 - 42 Article 2 of the Constitution. *American Home Missionary Society First Report* (New York, 1827), 3.
 - 43 Officers elected by the American Home Missionary Society had served for the previous society: The Hon. Stephen Van Rensselaer of Albany, president; Rev. Absalom Peters of New York, secretary; Peter Hawes, Esq. of New York, treasurer, a long list of distinguished vice-presidents, and a directorate of fifty of the laity and clergy. The office of the Society was located at 144 Nassau Street, New York.
 - 44 *A. H. M. S. First Report* (1827), 58-64.
 - 45 *Ibid.*, 20, 23.
 - 46 The home missionaries were almost invariably drawn from Andover, Bangor, Yale, Princeton, Hartford, Auburn and Lane seminaries. Harvard men rarely joined their ranks.

CHAPTER II

- 1 *A. H. M. S. First Report* (1827), 10, 45, 55.
- 2 *A. H. M. S. First to Eighth Reports* (1827-1834).
- 3 See Pease, *op. cit.*, 174, for map of the settlement of Illinois in 1830.
- 4 MS Records, Centre Presbytery. (Courtesy of the Illinois State Historical Society, Springfield, Ill.)
- 5 MS Minutes, Synod of Illinois (New School), 1831-1855. (Courtesy of Illinois State Historical Society.)
- 6 Shortly after his arrival in Quincy in 1830, Asa Turner wrote to someone in New York: "There is the most cordial union among all the Presbyterian brethren here. No polemic contention. All are of one heart, I might almost say of one belief." George F. Magoun, *Asa Turner and His Times* (Boston and Chicago, 1889), 131. Turner (who attended his first meeting of Illinois Presbytery in Jacksonville in April, 1831) spoke of "the greatest harmony of feeling and sentiment." He said he had come West "under the impression that it was necessary to be a Presbyterian." *Ibid.*, 126. William Carter, who came to Naples and Winchester in November, 1833, stated in 1860: "I had no other thought than that of laboring entirely in the Presbyterian church, and to build up Presbyterian churches. The Presbyterians had, as they claimed, possession of the ground, and I had no other wish than that they should retain it, exclusively, so far as Congregationalism was concerned." "Commemorative Discourse for the 25th Anniversary of the Congregational Association of Illinois," *Church Historical Documents*, 6.

- 7 Julian M. Sturtevant, Jr., ed., *Julian M. Sturtevant: An Autobiography* (New York, 1896), 193-194.
- 8 *Annual Narrative of Missionary Labors performed under . . . the Missionary Society of Connecticut, 1827-1831; Proceedings of the General Association of Connecticut, 1830-1833; Minutes of the General Association of Connecticut, 1834-1837.* (Courtesy of the Library of Oberlin College, the Missionary Research Library, Union Theological Seminary, New York City, and the officers and staff of the Connecticut Conference of Congregational and Christian Churches, Hartford, Conn.)
- 9 The original compact is preserved at Illinois College. The writer appreciates the many courtesies of the officers and staff of the College who showed him this beautiful document in May, 1942. The compact is reproduced in Charles Henry Rammelkamp, *Illinois College: A Centennial History, 1829-1929* (New Haven, 1928), 23-24.
Credit for the formation of the "Illinois Association" belongs to Grosvenor though he did not come to Illinois until 1853. At that time he was appointed to the faculty of Illinois College and remained two years. In 1870 he was reappointed and remained ten years. Illness has been assigned as the reason for his not coming West earlier. Meanwhile, however, he held pastorates at the East and in Ohio, and at one time was general agent for the Aetna Life Insurance Company at Cincinnati. (See *Congregational Yearbook for 1887.*) Cf. the favorable reaction of the American Home Missionary Society, Letter Book B, No. 1153, Absalom Peters to Mason Grosvenor, April 4, 1829. Cf. Mason Grosvenor to Absalom Peters, New Haven, February 26, 1829; same to same, New Haven, April 30, 1830; Asa Turner to Absalom Peters, New Haven, March 16, 1829; Theron Baldwin, Julian M. Sturtevant, and Asa Turner to Absalom Peters, New Haven, March 31, 1829; Mason Grosvenor to Peters, March 10, 1829; Sturtevant to Peters, New Haven, May 11, 1829; Sturtevant and Baldwin to Peters, New Haven, August 27, 1829; Sturtevant to Peters, New Haven, September 8, 1829; Jenney to Peters, New Haven, August 27, 1831; Kirby to Peters, New Haven, March 15, 1831.
- 10 Flavel Bascom, Romulus Barnes, Benoni Y. Messenger, Henry Herrick, Lucien Farnam, William Carter, and Albert Hale were the additional members of the "Illinois Association." Hale became an agent for the American Home Missionary Society at Springfield. Barnes, Carter, Farnam, and Bascom became exceedingly influential in the development of Congregationalism in Illinois. For an enticing portion of the latter's autobiography see Sweet, *The Congregationalists*, 231-284. The entire MS may be seen at Chicago Theological Seminary. Messenger and Herrick remained in Illinois only a short time. Cf. Henry Herrick to Absalom Peters, New Haven, April 9, 1830; Benoni Y. Messenger to Peters, New Haven, June 1, 1830 (letter endorsed by Jenney and Brooks).
- 11 John M. Ellis to Peters, Jacksonville, Ill., September 28, 1828.
- 12 Norma Adams, "Theron Baldwin: Principal of Monticello Sem-

- inary, 1838-1843," *Monticello College Bulletin* (July, 1939), 9.
- 13 Mason Grosvenor to John M. Ellis, New Haven, Conn., December 5, 1828. Letter filed in Tanner Library, Illinois College, quoted with permission of the College administration.
 - 14 John M. Ellis to Mason Grosvenor, Jacksonville, Ill., January 17, 1829. Letter filed in Tanner Library, Illinois College, quoted with permission of the College authorities.
 - 15 Absalom Peters to John M. Ellis, New York, March 27, 1829, A. H. M. S. Letter Book B, No. 1117, favorably refers to "the proposition of the Brethren at New Haven." Rammelkamp (*op. cit.*, 25) brings forward the name of Jairus Wilcox as one who signed the constitution of the "Illinois Association." The writer has been unable to find evidence of further connection of Wilcox with the projects of the Yale Band. Wilcox became the pastor of the church at Geneseo in 1838.
 - 16 Ellis to Peters, Jacksonville, Ill., November 2, 1830. "'It is indeed all that we have,' said my dear wife, 'but the interest of the Seminary, *at this crisis*, is of more consequence than our own private concerns—take the money and we will not fear to trust God with respect to the future.' This we did until it was all gone." Ellis experienced a humiliating delay in obtaining reimbursement from the Society.
 - 17 *Julian M. Sturtevant: An Autobiography*, 141.
 - 18 Rammelkamp, *op. cit.*, 39-46.
 - 19 Adams, *op. cit.*, 15; cf. Theron Baldwin to Mason Grosvenor, Vandalia, Ill., January 15, 1831. The letter filed in Tanner Library, Illinois College.
 - 20 Rammelkamp, *op. cit.*, 41-44.
 - 21 *Ibid.*, 58-59. Augustus T. Norton, *History of the Presbyterian Church, in the State of Illinois*, includes tributes to the Ellises written by Rev. David Dimond, D.D., and Mrs. M. H. Barton, 59ff, 66ff.
 - 22 *A. H. M. S. Eleventh Report (1837)*.
 - 23 *The Hampshire Colony Congregational Church: Its First Hundred Years, 1831-1931*. (Princeton, Ill., 1931), 9-10.
 - 24 They settled on the Bureau River in Putnam County, on July 6, 1831. *Ibid.*, 10. Cf. W. V. Pooley, "Settlement of Illinois, 1830-1850," *University of Wisconsin Bulletin, History series*, I (1908), 411.
 - 25 The only members of the said church that arrived at the above time were Nathaniel Chamberlin, Elijah Smith and his wife, Sylvia, and Mrs. Eli Smith. *The Hampshire Colony Congregational Church*, 10.
 - 26 The meetings in 1831 were held on June 12, July 6, October 20, and November 21. See Ella W. Harrison, "A History of the First Congregational Church of Princeton, Illinois," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, XX (1927), 103-111.
 - 27 Lucien Farnam to Absalom Peters, Princeton, Ill., November 3, 1835.
 - 28 Lucien Farnam to Absalom Peters, Princeton, Putnam Co., Ill., July 1, 1835.
 - 29 *The Hampshire Colony Congregational Church*, 10: Harrison, *op. cit.*, 106.

- 30 MS Records, Hampshire Colony Church.
- 31 "A Copy of Memoranda Kept by John B. Chittenden of his Trip from Guilford, Connecticut to Quincy, Ill." (Hammond Library, Chicago Theological Seminary.)
- 32 D. W. Clark to Revd. J. M. Sturtevant, D.D., Portland, Me., Feb. 26, 1885. Letter in Tanner Library, Illinois College, cited by permission of the College administration.
- 33 Chittenden "Memoranda."
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 Jeremiah Porter, "The Earliest Religious History of Chicago," *Fergus' Chicago Historical Publications* (Chicago, 1881), 53.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 54.
- 37 That is, Wolf Point, "the lands lying about the forks of the river." Cf. A. T. Andreas, *History of Cook County* (2 vols. Chicago, 1884), II, 224.
- 38 Porter, *op. cit.*, 55. Chicago was laid out on August 4, 1830, by James Thompson, a civil engineer, who made the survey and plat of the original town in Section 9, Township 39, Range 14 East of the Third Principal Meridian. See Bessie Louise Pierce, *A History of Chicago*, (2 vols. New York, 1937), I, 3. The area was that now bounded by State, Halsted, Madison, and Twelfth Streets. The school lands were located in Section 16, just south of the town site. Cf. John Moses and Major Joseph Kirkland, *The History of Chicago* (2 vols. Chicago and New York, 1895), I, 93, who give the town site erroneously, but are corrected by Professor Pierce.
- 39 Of the religious situation in the vicinity, Porter (*op. cit.*, 56) said: "North of Chicago there was no church this side of Lake Superior, except the Stockbridge Indian mission of the A. B. C. F. M. mission, and an Episcopal Indian mission, at Green Bay, Rev. Cutting Marsh in the first, and Rev. Mr. Cadle in the other. West, the nearest church was at Galena; and the first south-west was that at Princeton—the Hampshire Colony Congregational Church, Rev. Lucien Farnam, its first pastor. East, the nearest church was at White Pigeon, Michigan." Aratus Kent was the pastor at Galena. Christopher Cory was stationed at White Pigeon. All three were in the service of the American Home Missionary Society.
- 40 Porter, *op. cit.*, 56.
- 41 Pierce, *op. cit.*, 222.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 223. A manuscript of Beggs, entitled "Spiritual Notebook," containing many complete sermons, may be read at the Chicago Historical Society.
- 43 Porter, *op. cit.*, 59.
- 44 Andreas, *op. cit.*, 236; Pierce, *op. cit.*, 225. Porter considered himself a "counteracting influence" to Catholicism. Cf. *A History of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago, 1833-1941* (Chicago: Published by the Church and the Works Progress Administration, 1941), 11.
- 45 Porter, *op. cit.*, 57. Moses and Kirkland, *The History of Chicago*, II, 620, incorrectly state that Porter preached his first sermon in the schoolhouse at Wolf Point.

- 46 *A History of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago, 1833-1941*, 9.
- 47 Porter, *op. cit.*, 58.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 58.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 58.
- 50 The following persons were received at the formation of the church: from Chicago, Mr. John Wright, Mr. Rufus Brown, Mr. John S. Wright, Mr. Philo Carpenter, Mr. Jonathan H. Poor, Mrs. Elizabeth Brown, Mrs. Mary Taylor, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Syntha Brown; in the garrison, Capt. D. Wilcox, Mrs. S. G. Wilcox, Lieut. L. T. Jameson, Sergt. J. Adams, Mrs. H. Adams, Sergt. William C. Cole, Mrs. Julia Cole, Mrs. Ruth Ward, Richard Burtis, Benjamin Briscoe, Ebenezer Ford, John Guy, Isaac Inghram, William Johnson, David Lake, and James Murray. The list is given by Philo Otis, *The First Presbyterian Church of Chicago* (Chicago, 1900), 11, who states that the name of Miss Eliza Chappel was added at the jubilee in 1883. The list given in the W. P. A. *History* differs from that of Otis, in adding Miss Chappel's name, omitting the names of William Johnson and Mrs. Clark, and making numerous changes of spelling.
- 51 Moses and Kirkland, *The History of Chicago*, II, 621.
- 52 Otis, *op. cit.*, 11.
- 53 Porter, *op. cit.*, 59.
- 54 Pierce, *op. cit.*, 225.
- 55 Porter, *op. cit.*, 59.
- 56 *Ibid.*, 60. The dedication was followed by a revival. Fifty-two persons were gathered into the church, thus placing it on a solid footing. Pierce (*op. cit.*, 227) cites a notice carried in the *Chicago Democrat*, January 21, 1834.
- 57 *Ibid.*, 59. The formation of Mr. Freeman's church has been noted. His other church, in the country, forty miles from town, counted twelve members. This church was variously called Long Grove, Pavilion, and Bristol, and was formed in 1834 by Rev. Jeremy F. Tolman, with six charter members. From the first, Porter and Freeman labored together in a cordial spirit. *Ibid.*, 60, 65. The Pavilion Baptist Church is continued in the Yorkville Federated Church. *Centennial Celebration History*, written by Arthur P. Hill and Rev. Wilfred Wakefield (Yorkville, 1934). The writer has enjoyed the privilege of delightful conversations with Mr. Hill, who was born in Yorkville in 1860.
- 58 Porter, *op. cit.*, 64.
- 59 *Ibid.*, 64.
- 60 *Ibid.*, 63, 64.
- 61 For "Records of the Naperville church," see Sweet, *The Congregationalists*, 116-155. The approximate location of this church was in Town 38, Range 10 East of the 3rd P. M. (Lisle Township). Naperville Township is Town 38, Range 9. The place of settlement of those who formed the church was south of present-day Naperville.
- 62 Jeremiah Porter to Absalom Peters, Chicago, Ill., July 4, 1833.
- 63 Porter to Peters, Chicago, Ill., August 1, 1833. Cf. *First Congregational Church, Naperville, Illinois: History, 1833-1933*.
- 64 Porter to Peters, Chicago, Ill., September 4, 1833. Blackstone's

Grove was situated in the neighborhood of Hadley in Will County, in Section 26, Town 36, Range 11 East of the 3rd P. M. See James H. Rees, Land Agent, *Map of the Counties of Cook, Du Page, the East Part of Kane and Kendall and the North Part of Will, State of Illinois* (Chicago, 1851). This church, having been reorganized as Congregational in 1849, is continued in the Homer Congregational Church. It was founded by Jeremiah Porter on August 17, 1833, with eight members, in a two-room log cabin occupied by the Savage and Hollister families. "MS Records of the Fox River Union," 83. (Hammond Library, Chicago Theological Seminary).

65 Porter to Peters, Chicago, Ill., January 20, 1834.

66 William Kirby to Absalom Peters, Blackstone's Grove, Ill., August 1, 1834. Kirby states that he has been there "more than two months." Cf. Porter to Peters, Chicago, Ill., July 26, 1834. In 1831 Kirby was "engaged temporarily" on the faculty of Illinois College where he served two years, under "constant confinement and exhausting labors." In the autumn of 1832 he married Miss Hannah Wolcott of Jacksonville, but really of Windsor, Connecticut. In the spring of 1833 he took charge of the Union Grove church in Putnam County. "In this charge, the comfort and usefulness of his labors were greatly interrupted by those dissensions which were at that time rife in the Presbyterian Church, and hastening on to its disruption. The elements of discord were abundant and active in the church to which he ministered; and, at the end of a year, he judged it to be his duty to seek another field of labor. This he speedily found at Blackstone's Grove, Will County." Julian M. Sturtevant, *The Memory of the Just* (New York, 1852), 8. This was the funeral sermon delivered by President Sturtevant of Illinois College on the life and accomplishments of Mr. Kirby. After one and one-half years at Blackstone's Grove, Kirby went to Mendon where he remained nine years. He then became an agent for the American Home Missionary Society, serving first the whole state, later the central and southern portions only, up to the day of his death in 1851.

67 *First Congregational Church, Naperville, Illinois: History, 1833-1933*.

68 "Naperville Church Records," published in Sweet, *op. cit.*, 126.

69 *Manual of the Fox River Union, with a Historical Sketch* (Ottawa, 1863). The ministers present were Alfred Greenwood, Samuel Perry, and N. C. Clark. Churches represented were Big Grove, Long Grove, Du Page, and Plainfield.

70 Sweet, *The Presbyterians*, 101.

71 *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from A. D. 1821, to A. D. 1835 inclusive* (Philadelphia, n. d.), 338. The resolution was passed by a vote of 81 to 54. Cyrus L. Watson and Thomas Spilman, commissioners from Illinois, voted against it.

72 *Ibid.*, 340-341.

73 *Ibid.*, 343.

74 *Minutes of the General Association of Massachusetts, 1829* (Boston 1829), 9. Cf. *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian*

Church in the United States of America from A. D. 1821, to A. D. 1835 inclusive, 199-200, 213.

75 *Ibid.*, 216-217.

76 *Ibid.*, 244-245.

77 *Home Missionary* (April, 1829), 206, 211.

78 *The Missionary Reporter*, I, 11 (July 1, 1830), 161.

79 *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Board of Missions* (1832), 18.

80 *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Board of Missions* (1835), 19.

81 *A. H. M. S. Eighth Report* (1835), 11.

82 *Four Propositions sustained against the Claims of the American Home Missionary Society* (Cincinnati, 1831). The writer is indebted to the staff of the Wisconsin State Historical Society for their courtesy in showing him this publication. On Wilson, see R. L. Hightower, "Joshua L. Wilson: Frontier Controversialist," University of Chicago Ph.D. Thesis (1933).

83 Cincinnati, 1831. This publication is among the holdings of the Wisconsin Historical Society.

84 Absalom Peters to Joshua L. Wilson, New York, July 22, 1829; same to same, November 9, 1830. University of Chicago, Durrett Collection, Joshua L. Wilson Papers.

85 Joshua L. Wilson to the Trustees of Lane Seminary, Cincinnati, O., November 17, 1831; Joshua L. Wilson to John H. Groesbeck, Esq., Treasurer of Lane Seminary, Cincinnati, O., March 9, 1835. Wilson's subscription was originally \$150. Since September 15, 1829 he had paid \$45. He declined payment of the balance. (Courtesy of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill.)

86 *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from A. D. 1821, to A. D. 1835 inclusive*, 331-333, 336-337; cf. E. H. Gillett, *History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1864), II, 448.

87 *Minutes of the Convention of Delegates, met to consult on Missions, in the City of Cincinnati, A. D., 1831* (Lexington, Ky., 1831). In a communication sent to the Convention by the Kaskaskia Presbytery, preference was expressed for the Assembly's Board of Missions. Other presbyteries of Illinois were not represented. The convention failed to set up a new plan for conducting home missions. The Synod of Pittsburgh which was really the uninvited guest at the meeting weighted the vote against every Western proposal. The story is well told in *A Report of the Minority in the Convention of Domestic Missions, held in Cincinnati, November, 1831*. This work was published by a committee consisting of Asa Mahan, Daniel W. Lathrop, and James Gallaher, all of Ohio. Both of these works are among the holdings of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill. A "Secret Circular" was also put out by Dr. Ashbel Green and his followers to sway opinion in favor of the Board of Missions. Published in Sweet, *The Presbyterians*, 827-834.

88 "MS Minutes, Synod of Illinois (New School), 1831-1855," 7-9. (Courtesy of the Illinois State Historical Society).

- 89 See the scholarly study of Sidney Earl Mead, *Nathaniel William Taylor, 1786-1858: A Connecticut Liberal* (Chicago, 1942).
- 90 Quoted in Gillett, *op. cit.*, 456.
- 91 *Minutes of the General Assembly from A. D. 1821, to A. D. 1835 inclusive*, 329.
- 92 *Ibid.*, 271-272.
- 93 *Ibid.*, 287.
- 94 *Ibid.*, 287ff; cf. Gillett, *op. cit.*, 481.
- 95 *Congregational Herald*, September 6, 1855. Sturtevant had this to say: "Previous to the session of the General Assembly of 1830, there were many Presbyterians in the Northwest, in the habit of *acting* in the true spirit of the Plan of Union. Its true spirit was not a compact by which Congregationalism was to be forever shut up in New England, but an arrangement by which, over all the great west, Presbyterians and Congregationalists might fellowship each other, in the same churches, and the same ecclesiastical bodies, each enjoying his own preference, in respect to church and government. When brethren applied for admission, with 'clean papers,' from Congregational bodies they were admitted *without asking any questions*. It was not in those times supposed that a minister from New England had become a Presbyterian, by emigrating to the west, or by joining Presbytery, but only that he wished to enter into hearty and earnest cooperation with his Presbyterian and Congregational brethren who were in the field before him. He was not therefore asked to make any new declaration of his faith in respect to church government. In May, 1830, the General Assembly passed a resolution discountenancing this practice, and it was, as a consequence, from that time discontinued, so far as I know, in all the Presbyteries."
- 96 "MS Records, Centre Presbytery," 64-65, 70-71.
- 97 *Ibid.*, 103.
- 98 *Ibid.*, 118-120.
- 99 *Ibid.*, 135.
- 100 *Julian M. Sturtevant: An Autobiography*, 273.
- 101 *Minutes of the General Assembly from A. D. 1821, to A. D. 1835 inclusive*, 354, 356.
- 102 *Ibid.*, 368. Gillett (*op. cit.*, 456) states that these resolutions were passed, but the *Minutes* show him to have been in error.
- 103 University of Chicago, Durrett Collection, MS No. 631, Joshua L. Wilson Papers.
- 104 *Minutes of the General Assembly . . . from A. D. 1821, to A. D. 1835 inclusive*, 367.
- 105 *Ibid.*, 371.
- 106 *Ibid.*, 404.
- 107 Solomon Hardy to Absalom Peters, Quincy, Ill., July 5, 1832. Magoun, *Asa Turner and His Times*, states (124) that the Mendon church was composed of eighteen members from the Quincy congregation.
- 108 Frederick E. Stillwell, "Notes on the History of the Congregational Church at Mendon," unpublished MS in Hammond Library,

- Chicago Theological Seminary; cf. "MS Records, General Congregational Association of Illinois," I, 67, under date of May 17, 1849: "Sixteen years ago last Feb., the 1st Cong. Ch., in this state was organized, in a log cabin, in a thinly settled neighborhood & consisted of 16 or 18 members." (Hammond Library, C. T. S.). Cf. William Carter, *A Memorial of the Congregational Ministers and Churches of the Illinois Association on completing a quarter of a century of its history, etc.* (Quincy, Ill., 1863), 5-6: "The first Congregational church, organized in Illinois, was at Mendon in Adams County, February, 1833. . . . This Church was formed in the cabin of Deacon J. B. Chittenden (and) was originally composed of eighteen members."
- 109 Cyrus L. Watson to Absalom Peters, Rushville, Ill., August 20, 1834. Cf. James John Anderson, "Congregationalism Moves to Illinois, 1817-1844," unpublished B. D. Thesis (1935), Chicago Theological Seminary.
- 110 "Reminiscences of Deacon Willard Keyes," *A Memorial of the Congregational Ministers and Churches, etc.*, 28. Keyes was one of the first settlers of Quincy and one of the earliest members of the church there.
- 111 "Historical Sketches of the First Half Century of the First Congregational Church of Quincy," Thomas Pope, compiler (1898). Hammond Library, C. T. S.
- 112 Magoun, *op. cit.*, 125.
- 113 *Home Missionary* (August, 1833), 64-65.
- 114 Charles Hall to Asa Turner, New York, August 24, 1833, A. H. M. S. Letter Book G, No. 157.
- 115 Magoun, *op. cit.*, 125.
- 116 *Ibid.*, 125.
- 117 *A Memorial, etc.*, 28.
- 118 *Ibid.*, 6.
- 119 Augustus T. Norton, *History of the Presbyterian Church, in the State of Illinois*, 184.
- 120 *Ibid.*, 184.
- 121 Julian M. Sturtevant: *An Autobiography*, 199-200.
- 122 *Ibid.*, 202. Cf. "MS Records, Synod of Illinois (New School), 1831-1855," 27.
- 123 Magoun, *op. cit.*, 131. Turner's biographer has not a word to say about this distressing episode. Nor does Norton notice Turner's church. Sturtevant does not draw Turner into the trial nor into the series of events that followed it.
- 124 Norton, *op. cit.*, 194.
- 125 *The Independent*, October 14, 1852. The writer is indebted to Professor William Warren Sweet for making available his transcription of the proceedings of the Albany Convention.
- 126 *Home Missionary* (June, 1835), 34-35.
- 127 *Ibid.*, 35. The Quincy church was enthusiastic about benevolences. In 1835 it raised \$75.00 for the the American Home Missionary Society, \$75.00 for the American Board, \$100.00 for foreign tract

distribution, \$80.00 for the American Education Society, and \$30.00 for the American Bible Society.

128 Sturtevant, *op. cit.*, 195.

129 *Ibid.*, 195.

130 See Frank J. Heinl, "Jacksonville and Morgan County: An Historical Review," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, XVIII (1925), 5-38; and "Congregationalism in Jacksonville and Early Illinois," *Ibid.*, XXVII (1935), 441-462.

131 David B. Ayers to Absalom Peters, Jacksonville, Ill., March 6, 1833.

132 Heinl believes (*Journ. Ill. State Hist. Soc.*, XXVII (1935), 444) that the Congregational church of Jacksonville was "not born of differences with local Presbyterians."

133 Sturtevant, *op. cit.*, 198.

134 Among the Sturtevant papers at Illinois College is the following unfinished letter, Julian M. Sturtevant to Theron Baldwin (quoted with permission of the College administration):

"August 4, 1845, Illinois College. In the winter of 1829-30 I told br. Ellis that if my joining Presbytery depended on giving my assent to the Confession of Faith and form of government of the Pres. Church I never would join it. If that was a mistake it was a very conscientious one and as I have viewed the subject every hour of my life since I cannot regret it. In the spring of 1832 (the year should be 1833.—Ed.) when on trial before the Presbytery of Illinois for heresy I said in my defense I never have assented to the Standards of the Presbyterian Church & I never will: I never have formed my opinions with any reference to the Standards of the Presbyterian Church and I never will. I refused to argue the question at all whether my doctrines were contrary to the Confession of Faith or not. I contented myself with showing their agreement with the Bible. . . . In the fall of the same year when my brethren in the ministry with one consent declined I thought it my duty to officiate in organizing in this place a church according to the notions of church order of our Pilgrim Fathers and on that occasion I thought due to myself and to truth to disclose my approbation of those principles of church government. Was that a mistake? My Presbyterian friends thought so and began to whisper, (for they dared not speak above a whisper), "Ananias." . . . great good (has come of it) has it not placed ahead the cause of religious freedom? I think so . . . From this time onwards there has been a sore which has never been healed for an hour."

135 Sturtevant, *op. cit.*, 182, 193, 206.

136 Julian M. Sturtevant, "The Origin of 'Western Congregationalism': A Historical Discourse delivered on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Congregational Church, Jacksonville, Ill., December 15, 1883," *Celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Organization of the Congregational Church, Jacksonville, Ill., December 15th and 16th, 1883* (Jacksonville, Ill., 1884), 21.

137 *Ibid.*, 21-22. It is a salient fact that none of the historical publications of the Presbyterian churches of Jacksonville takes account

of the withdrawal of the twenty-two Congregationalists to form the Independent Church in 1833.

- 138 Carter's call was renewed at the end of the year and he remained as pastor until September, 1838, during which time the membership increased from thirty-two to one hundred. William Carter to Milton Badger, Pittsfield, Ill., January 21, 1839; also *A Memorial, etc.*, 7-8.
- 139 Sturtevant, "The Origin of Western Congregationalism," 22.
- 140 1833-1933: *One Hundredth Anniversary of the Congregational Church, Jacksonville, Illinois*. The statement in this bulletin that Jacksonville was the fourth Congregational church to come into existence in Illinois, the church in Mendon and the church in Naperville having been organized earlier in 1833, is incorrect.

The Presbyterian church was left without a pastor when John M. Ellis resigned at the end of 1831, though it enjoyed the frequent services of Theron Baldwin. At the time of the organization of the Congregational church, Baldwin was implored to accept the pastorate of the Presbyterian church. Since he was preaching more or less regularly for the Presbyterians, he informed the committee which extended him the call that he would continue to do so for some time to come. He did not turn down the call at once, but prayed and deliberated over the matter, spoke to his friend Albert Hale about it, and wrote to Peters in great detail. As agent, his services to the Society were of great importance, and he himself was inclined to feel that it was unwise to disrupt that relationship. He was, however, much inclined to accept this pastorate. Peters wrote a letter of several pages to put the case for the Society in the plainest terms. Hale, whom Baldwin suggested as his successor in the agency, was hardly acceptable to the Society. Besides, an interested gentleman in up-state New York, a faithful reader of Baldwin's letters in the *Home Missionary*, had just given the Society an amount fully covering Baldwin's salary. Peters put this matter squarely up to Baldwin as a divine intervention, and urged him so to regard it. His decision not to accept the pastorate of the Presbyterian church rested on his persuasion that he was of greater value to the Society than to the church. When he declined, Baldwin laid the matter before the people in an address, taking pains to explain the importance of his agency. The church, in the light of this presentation, understood Baldwin's declining and reluctantly dropped the matter when he agreed to preach for them for several weeks.

When the Baldwin-Peters correspondence is arranged in sequence, the matter is clarified: Theron Baldwin to Absalom Peters, Jacksonville, Ill., January 26 and 31, 1834 (January 31st letter missing from the A. H. M. S. files); Peters to Baldwin, New York, February 25, 1834, in which acknowledgment is made of Baldwin's two letters and anxiety is expressed over the introduction of Congregationalism in Illinois, Letter Book G, No. 359; Baldwin to Peters, Jacksonville, Ill., February 10, 1834, in which Baldwin asks advice on accepting the church call; Peters to Baldwin, New

York, March 17, 1834, in which Peters urges Baldwin to decline and remain as Society agent, Letter Book G, No. 417; Baldwin to Peters, Jacksonville, Ill., June 11, 1834, where he says he declined after fully stating his reasons to the church.

- 141 D. W. Clark to Revd. J. M. Sturtevant, D.D., Portland, Me., February 26, 1885.
- 142 Judge Edward P. Kirby, "son of a pioneer missionary, and grandson of one of the founders of the church," *Jacksonville Daily Journal*, December 22, 1908; cf. Mrs. T. P. Carter, *Jacksonville Daily Journal*, January 17, 1917. Clippings filed in Tanner Library, Illinois College.
- 143 Absalom Peters to Theron Baldwin, New York, August 27, 1833, Letter Book G, No. 164: "We have commissioned Br. Carter for your State, to be located by your advice, & though his modesty leads him to desire a more retired place, I hope you will make him stick at Jacksonville, if you can."
- 144 William Carter to Absalom Peters, Jacksonville, Ill., January 13, 1834.
- 145 Absalom Peters to Theron Baldwin, New York, February 25, 1834, Letter Book G, No. 359: "We are not much surprised, though we are very much grieved to learn that you meet with some serious difficulty, or rather embarrassment, from the conflicting prejudices entertained by some in Illinois on the subject of Church government. If it were possible, we do earnestly desire to dissuade our brethren, everywhere, not to contend & divide on this subject. And why should not this be possible? Is it not manifest to every intelligent, warm-hearted Christian of the West, that the feeling and talent which have been expended on this subject, in some portions of the church, have been worse than wasted?"

For ourselves, as we have looked abroad on the desolations of the land, we have been grieved by the tendency to division, in many places, on points of mere form & order, which have little to do with the spirit & essence of religion. We have therefore cautiously avoided taking any part in contentions of this sort, & we beg our brethren to excuse us from having anything to (do) with them. The members both of the Presbyterian & Congregational churches should understand that the A. H. M. S. is a Society formed for the spread of the gospel through the whole land. It has no controversy in relation to the existing orders of the churches. With Congregationalism or Presbyterianism, as such, it has nothing to do, but with the churches, under both of these forms, it rejoices to cooperate in supplying (the) destitute & aiding the needy.

The auxiliaries as well as the beneficiaries of this Society are ranged under both of these forms, & in all this we see no reasonable grounds of jealousy or suspicion, because they be all brethren. Hence we have never felt any restraint on this subject, but in many instances have granted aid to the destitute & needy, without even knowing the precise order of the church, being assured of the regular standing of the minister in one of the denominations

above named. We have accordingly aided some Presbyterian churches in New England, some Congregational churches in New York, Ohio, Michigan & Illinois, & we shall doubtless continue to do so, only assuring ourselves that the churches thus aided are regularly formed, & that their position is peaceful & kind in relation to surrounding churches &c. On this subject we fully concur with you in the course which you have marked out for yourself, as our Agent. We desire that our whole influence may be pacific.

We shall use no power to *crush* either Congregationalism or Presbyterianism, but exert our best endeavors to build up & extend both on their appropriate fields, & our opinion is that the appropriate field of each of these forms is just where the members of the church choose to adopt it, & can do so without contention; but, as you say, 'form or no form, the harmony of christian feeling must not be interrupted', nor christian communion disturbed. These principles we believe can not be too strongly urged upon the churches where there are any symptoms of division in relation to government. Especially should it be impressed upon our New England brethren, when they are a minority in the midst of a Presbyterian community, that they render a poor service to the church by getting up a contention on ch. government. We would say the same of a minority of Presbyterians in the midst of a Congl. church. Behold! how good & how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Love to all the brethren, Beecher, Sturtevant, &c."

- 146 William Carter to Julian M. Sturtevant, no place, no date. Letter on file in Tanner Library, Illinois College, quoted by permission of the College authorities. The probable date of this letter is November, 1833, as it appears to have been composed immediately after Carter's conference with Sturtevant following his arrival in Illinois. Carter said in 1860: "One of the first things I found, after coming to the State, was that Congregationalists from New England claimed the right to form Churches of their own order, where they could do so, without interfering with Presbyterians—that where a place was large enough for two self-sustaining Churches, one might be Congregational, if the brethren preferred it; and, that in organizing a Church in a new place, the majority of the members had a right to decide whether it should be Congregational or Presbyterian. This claim seemed so obviously just, that I could but at once accede to it, and adopt it. I made up my mind, that in such cases, when desired, I would assist in organizing Congregational Churches. This was the only ground I ever had occasion to maintain on this subject, and it was so reasonable that our Presbyterian friends soon yielded it." *A Memorial, etc.*, 6-7.
- 147 Sturtevant, "The Origin of Western Congregationalism," 20-21. In a footnote (*ibid.*, 23), obviously added at the time of publication, Sturtevant refers to the lack of antislavery principles as a contributing cause of the ecclesiastical revolution of which the Jacksonville church was an illustration. "The reason is," he

said, "that in those first beginnings of this revolution . . . its influence had not yet begun to be felt. The relations of slavery to the different protestant churches had not yet become sufficiently obvious to attract general attention. A few years later in the progress of the revolution, this cause became very influential."

- 148 Julian M. Sturtevant to Rev. Nathaniel W. Taylor, D.D., Rev. C. A. Goodrich, and Rev. Leonard Bacon, Illinois College, Jacksonville, Ill., January 1, 1834. This letter was supplied to the Historical Committee of the Congregational and Christian Conference of Illinois by Mrs. Robert N. Corwin of New Haven, Conn., a granddaughter of Dr. Bacon. The Conference gratefully acknowledges the courtesy of Mrs. Corwin and also that of Yale University in copying this letter from the Bacon Papers.
- 149 Sweet, *The Congregationalists*, 29-34.
- 150 Moses H. Wilder to Milton Badger, Bath, Ind., November 21, 1836.
- 151 Application of a committee of the church at Bath, Ind., to the Executive Committee of the A. H. M. S. Bath, Ind., September 29, 1836, signed by Uriah Rose and Benjamin Crocker and endorsed by Peter Crocker, the Richmond, Ind., pastor.

CHAPTER III

- 1 *Minutes of the General Association of Connecticut from 1837 to 1842 inclusive* (Hartford, Conn.)
- 2 *Minutes of the General Association of Connecticut for 1836.*
- 3 *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America for 1837*, 440, 444.
- 4 *Minutes of the General Association of Connecticut for 1837.*
- 5 *Annual Report of the Board of Missions for 1837*, 20; *Annual Report of the Board of Missions for 1845*, 27.
- 6 *A. H. M. S. Reports from 1833 to 1845 inclusive.*
- 7 R. S. Satterlee to Absalom Peters, Fort Winnebago, Portage of the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers, March 20, 1833; same to same, Fort Howard, Green Bay, M. T., September 10, 1833.
- 8 Abel L. Barber to Peters, Milwaukie, Mich. Ter., July 21, 1835.
- 9 Cyrus Nichols to Peters, Racine, W. T., December 17, 1836.
- 10 Lyman Beecher, *Plea for the West* (Cincinnati, 1835), 12.
- 11 *Third Annual Report of the Central Board of Agency for Home Missions* (Cincinnati, 1835).
- 12 *Sixth Annual Report of the Central Board of Agency for Home Missions* (Cincinnati, 1838).
- 13 Theron Baldwin to J. F. Brooks, Searritts Prairie, Ill., January 6, 1836.
- 14 See Sweet, *The Congregationalists*, 231-284.
- 15 *Western Citizen*, August 5, 1842. The MS Records of the Illinois State Anti-Slavery Society may be consulted at the Chicago Historical Society.
- 16 See R. A. Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860: A Study*

- of the *Origins of American Nativism* (New York, 1938). Professor Billington has probably overstated his case against the American Home Missionary Society in attributing to it a sorely anti-Catholic bias.
- 17 Theron Baldwin to John F. Brooks, Vandalia, Ill., December 4, 1834. (Courtesy of the administration of Illinois College).
 - 18 For a summary of the economic situation, see R. G. McGrane, *The Economic Development of the American Nation* (Boston, 1942).
 - 19 *A. H. M. S. Eleventh Report* (1837), 58.
 - 20 *A. H. M. S. Twelfth Report* (1838), 10, 56.
 - 21 *A. H. M. S. Fifteenth Report* (1841), 71-72.
 - 22 *A. H. M. S. Eighteenth Report* (1844), 90.
 - 23 *A. H. M. S. Nineteenth Report* (1845), 94.
 - 24 *The Independent*, October 14, 1852.
 - 25 *Minutes of the Quarter Centennial Meeting of the General Association of Illinois*, 18; cf. Martin K. Whittlesey, "The Record of Fifty Years," *Jubilee Papers* (Ottawa, 1894), 9.
 - 26 "Past and Future of Congregationalism in Illinois," *Illinois Society of Church History Papers, Congregational* (Chicago, 1895), 80. Bascom stated that there were sixty Congregational churches in 1844 and gave a clue to the existence of the Rock River Congregational Association, which Whittlesey, Emery, and others have overlooked or denied. Despite the small attendance for the organization of the General Association, there was no ground whatever, so Bascom affirmed, for any "suspicion of apathy in regard to the object of their meeting."
 - 27 Rammelkamp, *op. cit.*, 121.
 - 28 *Western Citizen*, December 4, 1843.
 - 29 Norma Adams, *Monticello College Bulletin* (July, 1939).
 - 30 Rammelkamp, *op. cit.*, 102ff.
 - 31 *A. H. M. S. Annual Reports from 1834 to 1845 inclusive*.
 - 32 On the settlement of Illinois in this period see T. C. Pease, *The Centennial History of Illinois*, II: *The Frontier State, 1818-1848* (Chicago, 1919); Lois Kimball Mathews, *The Expansion of New England* (Boston and New York, 1909); William Vipond Pooley, "The Settlement of Illinois from 1830 to 1850," *Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin, History Series*, I (1908), 289-595.
 - 33 Rev. G. S. F. Savage, "Reminiscences of Early Congregational Ministers and Churches in the Fox River Valley," *Illinois Society of Church History Papers, Congregational*, 67-77.
 - 34 *Semi-Centennial Register of the Officers and Alumni of Oberlin College, 1833-1883* (Chicago, 1883).
 - 35 Sweet, *The Presbyterians*, 111-120.
 - 36 Rammelkamp, *op. cit.*, 102.
 - 37 Matthew Spinka, ed., "Journal of a Pioneer Minister—the Rev. Lemuel Foster," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, XXI, (1928). Foster and his wife reached Jacksonville in the autumn of 1832 to begin work for the American Home Missionary Society. Foster accompanied Sturtevant and others to Vandalia for the meeting of the Synod of Illinois. "There was," he said,

- "no Congregational body in the state to attend, and we did not stop to spend a thought about it, nor was it *necessary* or *duty* until Presbyterians in after times began to 'ismize' religion. I should think more than half the brethren there were born Congregationalists, but we were for work, not for an *Ism*" (*Ibid.*, 187). Foster formed the church at Bloomington in the spring of 1834 as a Presbyterian church inasmuch as he was "aware that Congregationalism would be misunderstood except by Bro. Washburn and his wife (from Massachusetts)" (*Ibid.*, 192).
- 38 Rammelkamp, *op. cit.*, 121.
- 39 Harriet R. Congdon, "Early History of Monticello Seminary," *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society* (1924), 38-63; Norma Adams, *Monticello College Bulletin* (July, 1939).
- 40 Adams, *op. cit.*, 16, 23, 29.
- 41 Theron Baldwin, *Historical Address delivered in Monticello, Illinois, June 27, 1855, at the Seventeenth Anniversary of Monticello Female Seminary*, 13.
- 42 Cf. the Baldwin-Sturtevant Papers, Tanner Library, Illinois College, Jacksonville, Ill.
- 43 Hermann Richard Muelder, *Church History in a Puritan Colony of the Middle West: Centennial Lectures*. (Published by Central Congregational Church and First Presbyterian Church, Galesburg, Illinois, 1937).
- 44 Sweet, *The Presbyterians*, 99-125.
- 45 Samuel J. Baird, *A Collection of the Acts, Deliverances, and Testimonies of the Supreme Judicatory of the Presbyterian Church, etc.* 2nd ed., (Philadelphia, 1855), 670, 684.
- 46 Samuel Miller, *Letters to Presbyterians on the Present Crisis in the Presbyterian Church in the United States* (Philadelphia, 1833), 39.
- 47 *Minutes of the General Assembly . . . for 1837*, 440-444; Zebulon Crocker, *The Catastrophe of the Presbyterian Church in 1837, etc.* (New Haven, 1838); *Minutes of the General Assembly . . . for 1839* (New School), 58.
- 48 *Minutes of the General Assembly for 1838* (both Old School and New School).
- 49 *New York Observer*, August 15, 1846; cf. *Minutes of the Western Congregational Convention* (New York, 1878). (Hammond Library, C. T. S.).
- 50 *Proceedings of the General Convention of Congregational Ministers and Delegates in the United States, held at Albany, New York, on the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th of October, 1852* (New York, 1852), 13-14.
- 51 "MS Records, Synod of Illinois (New School)," 167, 181. (Courtesy of the Illinois State Historical Society).
- 52 The constitution of the proposed Convention, together with the provisions for the district conventions (as in Wisconsin) were published in the *Western Citizen*, August 19, 1842. On the Wisconsin body, see Richard Day Leonard, "The Presbyterian and Congregational Convention of Wisconsin," unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago (1939). Cf. Stephen Peet, *History of the*

- Presbyterian and Congregational Churches and Ministers in Wisconsin* (Milwaukee, 1851).
- 53 Elbridge G. Howe to Milton Badger, Abingdon, Lake Co., Ill., July 1, 1842; N. C. Clarke to Milton Badger, Elgin, Ill., October 4, 1842; George Gemmel to Milton Badger, Buffalo Grove, Ill., August 9, 1843; MS Records, Gap Grove Congregational Church. (Hammond Library, Chicago Theological Seminary).
 - 54 Absalom Peters to S. W. Magill, A. H. M. S. Letter Book K (1837-1838).
 - 55 Charles Thrift, "The Operations of the American Home Missionary Society in the South, 1826-1861," unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago (1936).
 - 56 Sweet, *The Congregationalists*, 125.
 - 57 Jeremiah Porter, "The Early Religious History of Chicago," 61; cf. "MS Diary of Nahum Gould." (Hammond Library, Chicago Theological Seminary).
 - 58 Plainfield was the only Congregational church present.
 - 59 Porter, *op. cit.*, 62.
 - 60 For the "Records of the Naperville Church" consult Sweet, *op. cit.*, 127-128.
 - 61 At that time Big Grove was in La Salle County. Today Big Grove Township is the southwesternmost township in Kendall County (which was erected in 1841). The "Big Grove" was in Sections 9, 10, 15 and 16. Ploughed fields were on all sides of it but the eastern. The church was in the vicinity of the present-day village of Newark.

The *Fox River Union Manuals for 1863 and 1890* state that the organization meeting took place in a cabin belonging to Samuel Collins. A person by this name was the patentee of lands in Big Grove Township, and his holdings are listed in Newton Bateman and Paul Selby, eds., *Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Kendall County* (Chicago, 1914), II, 666-667. There are, however, no biographical data concerning Collins in the work of Bateman and Selby. No Kendall County historian has mentioned him. Rev. E. W. Hicks, *History of Kendall County* (Aurora, Ill., 1877); Burt L. Henning, Maynard Clark, Rev. Oliver C. Johnson and Anna French Johnson, *Atlas and History of Kendall County* (Elmhurst, Ill., 1941).

The writer has inquired of his friends, the Rev. Oliver C. Johnson and Mr. Arthur P. Hill, of Yorkville and Bristol respectively, about the Collins family and the probable location of their cabin, in which the Fox River Union is said to have been formed. Mr. Hill has supplied a useful map and interesting recollections of early days. Mr. Johnson has furnished the following letter, dated Yorkville, Ill., July 9, 1942:

"I think Mr. Collins purchased most of the acreage which he acquired in Big Grove for his sons Samuel C. and Gerrit. June 8, 1841, he transferred 160 acres in Sec. 28 to Gerrit Collins. Later there is a transfer to Samuel C. Collins and Gerrit Collins of lands in Sections 29 and 20 with the reservation that Samuel

Collins and his wife should have the control and use of these lands during their lifetime. On my oldest map made in 1876, I find that there was a small grove on Sec. 20 and a little on 29 which is named Collins Grove. I assume that log house where the Fox River Union was formed was on the fractional S. E. $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 20 named in the (Bateman and Selby) description of lands which Mr. Collins secured from the U. S. government, as that is in the timber where early settlers sought to locate."

When one drives west on Illinois State Highway 52, he crosses Big Grove Township at the top of Sections 28 and 29 and at the base of Section 20. Sections 20, 28 and 29 have a common point in this highway, two miles east of the Kendall-La Salle county-line. This point is the approximate location where the Fox River Union was organized in 1835.

- 62 *Minutes of the General Association of Illinois for 1869*, 18. There were undoubtedly more than this number. Many Congregational churches had not as yet affiliated with the Union.
- 63 Sweet, *op. cit.*, 156-161.
- 64 *Ibid.*, 127, 162.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 139-145.
- 66 *Minutes of the General Association of Illinois for 1869*, 18.
- 67 *Ibid.*, 18. Here it is claimed that there were but two local associations when the General Association was organized at Farmington in June, 1844. The "Minutes of the Convention of the Congregational Churches of Illinois, 1834, and of the Congregational Association of Illinois, 1835-1840," published for the first time by Professor Sweet, contain references to this long-neglected association (*The Congregationalists*, 188, 196, 202, 208, 281). In two addresses which he delivered before Congregational gatherings, the late Rev. Frank S. Brewer, pastor (1920-1926) of the First Congregational Church of Geneseo, mentioned the Rock River Association, but his conclusions are not warranted by the original sources (which he did not investigate). The Rev. Dr. Winthrop S. Hudson, of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, has made incidental references to the Rock River Association in his essay, "The Formation of the First Associations, 1833-1842," unpublished MS in Hammond Library, C. T. S. The writer's detailed study, "Rock River Congregational Association, 1838-1848," will be found in Hammond Library, C. T. S. He wishes here to acknowledge an unpayable debt of gratitude to scores of church clerks, pastors, public and college librarians, and friends, all of whom, kindly and efficiently, facilitated his research. Many persons have supplied transcripts of records and other information useful in preparing this section. He has also made every effort to find the original Minutes of the Rock River Association, without avail.
- 68 Elisha H. Hazard to Milton Badger, Dixon's Ferry, Ill., May 31, 1838.
- 69 Princeton (Hampshire Colony), Princeton (Independent), Lyndon, Rockford (First), Byron, Buffalo Grove, Grand Detour, Dover, Rockton, Beloit, W. T. The latter two were members of the Presbyterian and Congregational Convention of Wisconsin. Geneseo church was not a member of Rock River Association.

- 70 "MS Records, First Congregational Church of Geneseo"; "MS Records, Convention of Beloit (Wis.), June 14, 1842-March 1, 1861," 5-6 (courtesy of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison, Wis.); cf. *The Centenary: The First Congregational Church in Beloit, Wisconsin, 1838-1938* (Beloit, Wis., 1938); *Semicentennial of the Lyndon Congregational Church* (Morrison, Ill., 1886); *Fiftieth Anniversary of the First Congregational Church of Rockford, Illinois* (Rockford, Ill., 1887), 15; Jean I. Palmer and George V. Bohman, *The First Presbyterian Church of Princeton, Illinois: Its First Century, 1837-1937* (Princeton, Ill., 1937), 22.
- 71 "MS Records, Hampshire Colony Church."
- 72 "MS Records, Byron (Bloomington) Congregationalist Church"; "MS Records, First Congregational Church of Rockford, Ill." The writer here expresses his thanks to the Rev. Dr. John Gordon, pastor of the Second Congregational Church of Rockford, for his kindness in furnishing material relative to the old First church of that city.
- 73 MS Records, Dover Congregational Church.
- 74 As home missionaries arrived and new churches were organized, applications for aid from the American Home Missionary Society received the attention of the Association Clerk. In the earliest years this office was held by Rev. Ammon Gaston; from 1843 to 1845 the Rev. Owen Lovejoy performed duties of this nature. After 1845 the Clerk was the Rev. R. M. Pearson of Grand Detour. An advisory committee also helped to place newly-arriving ministers and recommended aid to churches requiring it. MS Records, Hampshire Colony Church; church applications to the A. H. M. S., dated February 13-14, 1843, October 26, 1844, signed by Lovejoy; *Western Citizen*, May 18, 1843, May 29, 1845; *Western Herald*, May 13, 1846, September 30, 1846; *Herald of the Prairies*, May 12, 1847, September 29, 1847. (Courtesy of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill., and the Chicago Historical Society).
- 75 Sweet, *op. cit.*, 188, 196.
- 76 Consult Pease, Mathews, and Pooley, cited above. See also Clyde E. Buckingham, "Early Settlers of the Rock River Valley," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, XXXV (1942), 236-259; cf. Royal B. Way, ed., *The Rock River Valley: Its History, Tradition, Legends and Charm*, 3 vols. (Chicago, 1926).
- 77 "MS Minutes, Congregational Association of Illinois," I, in Hammond Library, C. T. S. Cf. Sweet, *op. cit.*, 188, 196, 202, 208, 281.
- 78 *Minutes of the General Association of Congregational Churches and Ministers of the State of Iowa, 1840-1855* (Hull, Ia., 1888), 13.
- 79 "MS Minutes, General Congregational Association of Illinois," I.
- 80 Nahum Gould, "MS History of the Ottawa Presbytery," 24. (Courtesy of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary.)
- 81 "MS Minutes, Presbytery of Galena, 1841-1863," 13, 22, 24, 29. (Courtesy of Rev. Mr. Bonham, Rockford, Ill.)
- 82 "MS Minutes, Synod of Illinois (New School)," 167, 174, 181.
- 83 "MS Records, Convention of Wisconsin," I, 77. (Courtesy of the Wisconsin State Historical Society.)

- 84 A. L. Chapin, "Beloit College and Rockford Female Seminary," *Minutes of the Quarter Centennial Meeting of the General Association of Illinois, at Farmington, 1869*, 30-31; Edward D. Eaton, *Historical Sketches of Beloit College* (New York, 1928), 120-121; "MS Records, Trustees of Beloit College," Book A, 1-15. The writer is indebted to the kindness and scholarly interest of the Acting President of Beloit College and of Professor Robert K. Richardson of that institution, for providing these references.
- 85 Vernal Cooley, "Illinois and the Underground Railroad to Canada," *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society for 1917*, 76-98; cf. *Western Citizen*, August 3, 1843, August 17, 1843, October 19, 1843.
- 86 *Western Citizen*, October 26, 1843.
- 87 Cooley, *op. cit.*, 83; *Western Citizen*, May 16, 1844.
- 88 *Western Citizen*, May 9, 1844.
- 89 *Western Citizen*, January 25, 1844 (Picatonica); February 29, 1844 (Hampshire Colony); April 11, 1844 (La Moille); July 4, 1844 (Dover); July 18, 1844 (Providence); August 1, 1844 (Sycamore).
- 90 Milton Badger to R. M. Pearson, New York, July 22, 1844, A. H. M. S. Letter Book R, No. 221.
- 91 The Oberlin men were natives of the regions swept by the Finney revivals of the previous decade, and at Oberlin were trained in abolitionism. Some, reckoned among the "Lane rebels," were members of the first theological class at Oberlin. In Illinois they were unceremoniously thrown in the discard. Usually this meant a return to farming, but there were exceptions. By reorienting themselves to the prevailing winds of doctrine some were spared this end. By practicing that discretion which frequently is the better part of ministerial valor, others missed oblivion. Some removed to other states. But it was suicidal to preach unadulterated Oberlinism, since the American Home Missionary Society refused to recommission Oberlin men. Milton Badger, one of the secretaries, rushed up and down the state checking the truth of the tales of heterodoxy which he had heard concerning them. Honest enough to admit that gossips had etched a picture much worse than reality, Badger nonetheless found certain Oberlin graduates under suspicion. Milton Badger to Charles Hall, Chicago, Ill., July 23, 1842; same to same, July 25, 1842.
- 92 Ebenezer Brown to Milton Badger, Roscoe, Ill., December 12, 1842; N. C. Clarke to Milton Badger, Elgin, Ill., August 15, 1842; Flavel Bascom to Charles Hall, Chicago, Ill., August 16, 1842; Asa Donaldson to Milton Badger, Dover, Ill., July 15, 1844.
- 93 N. C. Clarke to Milton Badger, Elgin, Ill., October 4, 1842.
- 94 A. H. M. S. Letter Book Q, No. 1088, March 5, 1844, asks R. M. Pearson, "Do you know whether Charles Adams of Providence is now a member of the Rock River Association, and whether he is regarded by his brethren in your region as a Perfectionist?" Adams was dropped for "want of satisfactory evidence that your theological views are in accordance with those of the great body

- of Presbyterian churches." Badger to Adams, A. H. M. S. Letter Book R, No. 1541, April 8, 1845.
- 95 George Gemmel and R. M. Pearson to Milton Badger, Byron, Ill., January 13, 1845.
- 96 R. M. Pearson to Milton Badger, Grand Detour, Ill., August 5, 1844.
- 97 R. M. Pearson to Milton Badger, Grand Detour, Ill., June 24, 1845.
- 98 Milton Badger to R. M. Pearson, New York, April 21, 1845, A. H. M. S. Letter Book R, No. 1612.
- 99 Asa Donaldson, George Gemmel and R. M. Pearson to Milton Badger, Grand Detour, Ill., July 1, 1845; "MS Minutes, General Congregational Association of Illinois," I, 16-17.
- 100 In all probability, Rock River Association boundaries were too far-flung for the churches to maintain regular attendance. Cf. Flavel Bascom, "Past and Future of Congregationalism in Illinois," *Illinois Society of Church History Papers, Congregational*, 80. Bascom attended a meeting of the Association in 1840. Flavel Bascom to Milton Badger, Buffalo Grove, Ill., September 10, 1840. The writer's attention was called to this letter by Dr. Winthrop S. Hudson.

Moreover, on Christmas Day, 1844, the Independent Congregational Church of Princeton (which finally was admitted to the Association in 1839) became Presbyterian and, severing its connection with Rock River Association, joined Knox Presbytery. Jean I. Palmer and George V. Bohman, *The First Presbyterian Church of Princeton, Illinois*, 16, 24. A new alignment of the churches had already been effected in October, 1844, by the organization of the Central Association. Lathrop Taylor, "History of Central Association," *Ill. Soc. of Church History Papers, Congregational*, 91-96. Thus a portion of its strength was sheared off the southern extremity precisely when Association churches were embroiled in theological issues.

At the northern extremity the Association encountered uncompromising Presbyterianism of the New School variety. Numerous strong churches, with American Home Missionary Society pastors, were formed as Presbyterian despite a Congregational numerical superiority, Freeport and Belvidere being prime examples. Efforts to consummate the Convention of Northern Illinois on the model of the Wisconsin Convention only reanimated denominational consciousness. Since the leaders in that movement contemplated abolishing all associations and presbyteries, the scheme was stoutly resisted by the Fox River Union and was finally rejected by an overwhelming vote. Elbridge G. Howe to Milton Badger, Abingdon, Lake Co., Ill., July 1, 1842; N. C. Clarke to Milton Badger, Elgin, Ill., October 4, 1842. The Rock River Association took "decisive action," though some of its members favored the Convention. George Gemmel to Milton Badger, Buffalo Grove, Ill., August 9, 1843. Additional Congregational churches were formed in northwestern Illinois but few of these united with the Association; the rise of the Presbytery of Galena in 1841, under the able leadership of Aratus Kent, forestalled their adherence.

Many Congregational churches on the Wisconsin Territory line might have shared their strength with the Association but chose to enlist in the Wisconsin Convention, thus inhibiting the growth of Rock River Association. R. M. Pearson to Milton Badger, Grand Detour, Ill., July 26, 1845.

Other factors which hastened the disintegration lay in the religious and moral temper of the Rock River Association; recurrent theological strife endangered its unity and peace. The presence of Oberlin men within its bounds precipitated a division; when the American Home Missionary Society discharged some of the Association's ministerial members, patience was taxed, morale was broken. To belong to Rock River Association placed a minister under the suspicion of tolerating doctrine and discipline at variance with those generally acceptable in New England. It must be recalled and emphasized that Congregationalism from its beginnings in Illinois was on the defensive, was depreciated by New Englanders; one fails to understand the psychology of the conventions held at Michigan City and at Albany without underscoring this fact. Again, the American Home Missionary Society, though a national institution, was dominated by New Yorkers and New Englanders. It should not be difficult, therefore, to grasp the reasons why missionaries in northern Illinois preferred to unite with a presbytery, or with an orthodox Congregational association like the Fox River Union, or with the Convention of Wisconsin, or even to attempt the formation of a similar Convention in northern Illinois, to joining a suspected body such as the Rock River Association came to be.

- 101 George Gemmel to Milton Badger, Byron, Ill., May 13, 1845; Asa Donaldson to Milton Badger and Charles Hall, Dover, Ill., November 11, 1845; R. M. Pearson to Milton Badger, Grand Detour, Ill., November 11, 1847; same to same, February 9, 1847; same to same, August 4, 1847; same to same, August 8, 1848. That dissatisfaction was general may be seen in the fact that many church records in the later years contain no entries of its affairs.

As their purpose gained ground, nine ministers and laymen held a Convention at Rockford on November 2, 1847, where a committee was appointed to draft a constitution for a new association. When the Convention reassembled at Rockford on February 15-16, 1848, the movement crystallized in the formation of the Winnebago and Ogle Congregational Association. Six churches, namely, Rockford, Byron, Rockton, Roscoe, Westfield, and Twelve Mile Grove were represented, and the following officers were elected: Rev. Lewis H. Loss of Rockford, Moderator; Rev. Lewis Benedict of Rockton, Clerk; Rev. Ebenezer Brown, Treasurer. *Herald of the Prairies*, January 26, 1848, March 1, 1848. Cf. *Constitution and Standing Rules of the Rockford Congregational Association*. The writer is indebted to Mrs. Ira D. Stone, Registrar of the Northern Congregational Association of Illinois, for supplying this document, a transcript of which is now on file in

- Hammond Library, C. T. S. The formation of the Winnebago and Ogle Association was an act of desperation motivated by the desire to purge unwanted churches and ministers from fellowship. The last meeting of the Rock River Association of which there is any record was held at Princeton, in August, 1848, with but two pastors in attendance—Asa Donaldson and Reuel M. Pearson. Pearson, who had become a member of the Winnebago and Ogle Association, wrote of the probable extinction of the Rock River body (R. M. Pearson to Milton Badger, Grand Detour, Ill., August 8, 1848). Something more valuable than its own existence was salvaged from its wreckage, however, for ultimately four associations were born of its churches, namely, Central (1844), Winnebago and Ogle (1848), Geneseo (1851), and Rockford (1852). Cf. *Minutes of the General Association of Illinois for 1853* (Peoria, 1853).
- 102 Sweet, *op. cit.*, 34-36; cf. Rev. Frank N. Dexter, ed., *A Hundred Years of Congregational History in Wisconsin* (Wisconsin Congregational Conference, 1933).
- 103 Sweet, *op. cit.*, 39-42; cf. Charles Arthur Hawley, "Some Aspects of Congregationalism in Relation to the Early Cultural Development of Iowa," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, XXXV (1937), 181-205.

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TABLE 1

Congregational Churches formed between 1831 and 1837 inclusive

<i>Year organized</i>	<i>Church</i>	<i>Year organized</i>	<i>Church</i>
1831	(1) Princeton (Hampshire Colony)	(18) Elgin	
1833	(2) Mendon (Fairfield)	(19) Geneseo	
	(3) Quincy	(20) Warsaw	
	(4) Jacksonville	(21) Lyndon	
	(5) The Mounds (Adams County)	(22) Payson (Pleasant Grove)	
1834	(6) Naperville (Du Page)	(23) Plymouth (Round Prairie)	
	(7) Summer Hill	(24) Waverly	
	(8) Plainfield (Walker's Grove)	(25) Eola (East Big Woods)	
	(9) Atlas (Rockport)	(26) St. Mary's (Shiloh Prairie)	
	(10) Big Grove	(27) Carthage	
	(11) Vermilionville	(28) East Du Page	
	(12) Griggsville	(29) Elk Grove	
1835	(13) Batavia (Big and Little Woods)	1837	(30) Byron
	(14) Barry (Pike County)		(31) St. Charles
	(15) Ausable		(32) Mission Institute No. 1
	(16) Long Grove (Bristol)		(33) Rockford
			(34) Princeton (Independent)
1836	(17) La Harpe (Franklin)		(35) Grand Detour
			(36) Buffalo Grove

Note: Table 1 shows Congregational churches formed between 1831 and 1837 inclusive. Congregational churches formed after 1837 are shown in Table 2. Several churches shown in Table 1 were originally Presbyterian. The numbers before the churches refer to their position on the map.

The following sources have been consulted for the tables and the map: (Manuscript). MS Minutes, Congregational Association of Illinois; MS Minutes, General Congregational Association of Illinois; American Home Missionary Society letters and official Letter-Books; James John Anderson, "Congregationalism Moves to Illinois," B.D. Thesis, Chicago Seminary (1935); Rev. Frank S. Brewer Papers, unpublished MSS, C.T.S.; Winthrop S. Hudson, "The Formation of the First Associations, 1833-1842," unpublished MS, C.T.S.; individual church records and church histories; maps in the Geography department of the University of Chicago, the Chicago Historical Society and the Newberry Library, Chicago, Ill. (Printed). *Minutes of the General Association of Illinois from 1852 to 1870 inclusive*; Joseph E. Roy, "Fifty Years of Home Missions," *Jubilee Papers* (Ottawa, 1894); Roy, "History of Congregationalism in Illinois," *Illinois Society of Church History Papers, Congregational* (Chicago, 1895); *Yearbook of the Congregational and Christian Churches for 1940*; William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, III: The Congregationalists* (Chicago, 1939).

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TABLE 2

Congregational Churches formed between 1838 and 1844 inclusive

<i>Year organized</i>	<i>Church</i>	<i>Year organized</i>	<i>Church</i>
1838	(37) Bunker Hill	(55) Union Grove	
	(38) Dover	(56) Wethersfield	
	(39) Lockport	1840	(57) Garden Prairie
	(40) Rockton (Pekato- neka)		(58) Lamoille
	(41) Woodburne (Bunk- er Hill)		(59) Sycamore
	(42) Lisbon		(60) Albany
	(43) Woodville		(61) Ivanhoe (Fremont)
	(44) Newtown		(62) Thorn Grove
	(45) Jericho		(63) Atlanta
	(46) Monmouth		(64) Bloomington (Meacham's Grove)
	(47) Winchester		(65) Big Rock Creek
1839	(48) Ottawa	1841	(66) Gooding's Grove
	(49) Fulton City		(67) Dundee
	(50) Mission Institute No. 2		(68) Half Day (Middle- sex)
	(51) Theopolis		(69) Millburn
	(52) Beebe's Grove		(70) Marshall
	(53) Gap Grove		(71) Providence
	(54) Hickory Creek		(72) Seward
			(73) Hillsgrove

	(74) Walnut	(92) Bloomington
	(75) Pittsfield	(93) Mount Hope
	(76) Newburgh	(94) Oswego
1842	(77) Pleasant Grove (Groveland)	(95) Richmond (Monte- lona)
	(78) Canton	(96) Tremont
	(79) Crystal Lake	(97) Munro (Park Ridge)
	(80) Lisle	(98) Newark
	(81) Prairie City (Vir- gil)	(99) Savanna
	(82) Big Woods	(100) Farmington
	(83) Albion, Trinity	(101) Eagle Point
1843	(84) Orangeville (Wayne Center)	(102) Bernadotte
	(85) Big Rock (Acosta)	(103) Metamora
	(86) Paw Paw Grove	1844 (104) McHenry
	(87) Mission Grove	(105) Moline
	(88) Lee Center	(106) Collinsville
	(89) Lyonsville (Flag Creek)	(107) Joliet
	(90) Roscoe	(108) Somanauk
	(91) Waukegan (Little Fort)	(109) Windham (North- ville)
		(110) Fairfield (Kane County)

Note: While many of these churches were originally Presbyterian and chose the Congregational polity during or after the intense strife of 1837-38 within the General Assembly, some Congregational churches reverted to Presbyterian polity. Dates indicate when the church became Congregational. Numbers refer to positions on the map. Some of the churches shown had gone out of existence before 1844 when the General Congregational Association was formed.

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TABLE 3

Congregational Churches formed between 1830 and 1844 and listed in the *Yearbook of the Congregational and Christian Churches for 1940*.

<i>Year organized</i>	<i>Church</i>
1830	(1) a Quincy
1831	(2) b Princeton
1833	(3) c Union, Albion, R. D.
	(4) d Homer, Lockport, R. D.
	(5) e Naperville
	(6) f Mendon
	(7) Jacksonville
1834	(8) g Yorkville, Federated
	(9) h Peoria, First Federated
	(10) Summer Hill
	(11) Plainfield

Note: Other churches known to have been founded in this period are shown, dates in the *Yearbook* to the contrary notwithstanding. Footnotes indicate special circumstances.

^a

Founded in 1830 as Presbyterian; became Congregational in 1833.

^b

Hampshire Colony Congregational Church, which was organized at Northampton, Mass., and reached Illinois in July, 1831, is the oldest Congregational church in the state.

^c

Organized as a Christian church; now Congregational-Christian.

^d

Founded in 1833 as Presbyterian; became Congregational in 1849.

^e

Founded in 1833 as Presbyterian; became Congregational in 1834.

^f

The church at Fairfield, now Mendon, was the first Congregational church to be organized in Illinois. For many years the Mendon people did not know the older Princeton church was in existence.

^g

A federation was formed in 1920, consisting of three churches: Bristol Baptist (org. 1834), Pavilion Baptist (org. 1836) and Long Grove Congregational (org. 1835).

^h

Founded in 1834 as Presbyterian; became Congregational in 1847, federated since 1937.

Year organized

Church

1835

(12) i Batavia

1836

(13) j Chandlerville

(14) k Geneseo

(15) l West Chicago

(16) La Harpe

(17) Elgin

(18) Payson

(19) Plymouth

(20) Waverly

(21) Lyndon

1837

(22) m Galesburg, Central Church

(23) n Griggsville

(24) o Peru

(25) p Pittsfield

(26) q Big Woods

(27) r Downer's Grove

(28) s Byron

(29) St. Charles

ⁱ

Organized as the Big and Little Woods church; removed to Batavia, 1841.

^j

Founded in 1836 as Presbyterian; became Congregational in 1848.

^k

Founded in 1836 as Congregational; became Presbyterian in 1838; became Congregational again in 1850.

l

The original Turner church was founded in 1836 as Presbyterian. It became Congregational in 1856. The present church is descended through this line.

m

Founded in 1837 as Presbyterian; became Congregational in 1855.

n

Inactive since 1936, but supports Congregational benevolences.

o

Founded in 1837 as Presbyterian; became Congregational in 1853.

p

Founded in 1837 as Presbyterian; became Congregational in 1841.

q

The church of Big and Little Woods was formed in 1835. In 1841 it was removed to the site of Batavia. The East Big Woods Church (Eola) was formed in 1836. The new Big Woods church was formed in 1842.

r

The present organization was formed in 1866, but its line goes back to the East Du Page Church which was formed in 1837.

s

Byron Congregational Church and Methodist Episcopal Church federated since 1931.

Year organized

Church

1838

(30) t Aurora
(31) u Rockton, Federated
(32) v Ivanhoe
(33) Bunker Hill
(34) Woodburn (Bunker Hill)
(35) Dover
(36) Lockport

1839

(37) w Crete
(38) x Godfrey
(39) y Sumner, Bethlehem
(40) z Granville
(41) Ottawa

1840

(42) aa Sycamore
(43) Garden Prairie
(44) Lamoille

1841

(45) Dundee
(46) Marshall
(47) Millburn
(48) Providence

t

Founded in 1838 as Presbyterian; became Congregational in 1848.

u

Founded in 1838 as Congregational; merged with the Baptist church in 1915.

v

Founded in 1838 as Presbyterian; became Congregational in 1840.

w

Crete church formed from churches of Beebe's Grove and Thorn Grove.

x

Founded as "The Church of Christ" with the assistance of Theron Baldwin and Capt. Godfrey; joined Southern (Morgan) Congregational Association in 1855.

y

Founded as a Christian church; now Congregational-Christian.

z

Founded in 1839 as Presbyterian; became Congregational in 1853.

aa

Founded in 1840 as Congregational; federated since 1926; data requested not supplied.

Year organized

Church

1842

(49) bb Seward

(50) cc Lisle

(51) dd Atwood, Lake Fork

(52) ee Canton

(53) Crystal Lake

1843

(54) ff Richmond, Federated

(55) gg Big Rock

(56) hh Ashton, Washington Grove

(57) ii Park Ridge, Community

(58) Lee Center

(59) Lyonsville

(60) Roscoe

(61) Waukegan

(62) jj Oswego

1844

(63) kk Hidalgo

(64) ll Somanauk

(65) Moline, First

bb

Present Seward church is descended from the original Twelve Mile Grove church (sometimes known as Pecatonica) which was founded in 1841.

cc

Lisle church traces its ancestry through the East Du Page church which was formed in 1837.

dd

Founded as a Christian church; now Congregational-Christian.

ee

Canton church founded as Presbyterian in 1828; New School-Old School controversy divided the church, 1838; Congregational church formed from the New School Presbyterian church, 1842.

ff

Founded as Congregational; federated since 1937 with the Methodist church.

gg Both Welsh and English Congregational churches were formed in this place in 1843, and a small Congregational church was in existence here even in 1840. Present church founded in 1859.

hh

Founded as a Christian church; now Congregational-Christian.

ii

The original Munro church was Congregational. Present church was established in 1917.

jj

Data requested not supplied.

kk

Founded as a Christian church; now Congregational-Christian.

ll

A Congregational church was formed here in 1844. Present Union Congregational Church was formed in 1885 by merger of the Presbyterian, Methodist Episcopal and Methodist Protestant churches.

CHAPTER IV

- 1 Cf. the Reverend Frederick I. Kuhns' estimate in the previous chapter, p. 73.
- 2 *Western Citizen* (Chicago, October 5, 1843); I am indebted to the Rev. Frederick I. Kuhns for the material dealing with the Convention held at Princeton on November 15, 1843; he found the two important reports in the files of the *Western Citizen* in the Chicago Historical Society. The full text is as follows:

NOTICE

*To the Congregational Churches scattered throughout
Illinois and Iowa:*

DEAR BRETHREN:—Deeming it greatly desirable that we should become acquainted with each other's wants, burdens and prosperity—that we may share the one and rejoice in the other—that we may become co-workers in the promotion of every good cause—that we may by combining our strength, be able to defeat all incidious attacks and open assaults against our Church Polity, which we look upon of course as scriptural, and happily combining like the ancient coat of mail, strength and flexibleness, and that we may take some measures to be represented as a body to our Brethren in the East, who agree with us as to the form of Church Government, and afford them evidence that we have not departed from the "Faith once delivered to the Saints;" we therefore, the undersigned, invite all the churches above addressed to meet in Convention at Princeton, on the Wednesday after the second Monday of

November next, at 10 o'clock, A. M., for the purpose of organizing a General Conference of the Congregational Churches of Illinois and Iowa.

WILLIAM CARTER,
HORATIO FOOTE,
JOHN BALLARD,
EBENEZER BROWN,
GEORGE GEMMEL,
N. C. CLARK,
LUCIUS FOOTE,
OWEN LOVEJOY.

September 21st, 1843.

- 3 "Minutes of the Congregational Convention," in *Western Citizen*, March 7, 1844.
- 4 The Illinois Association passed a vote urging its members to attend the meeting at Farmington, but not otherwise expressing its judgment. Unpublished "Minutes of the Illinois Association," 1834-58 (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary), March 29, 1844.
- 5 Unpublished "Minutes of the General Congregational Association of Illinois" (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary), I, 4.
- 6 *Ibid.* This provision, making "the Christian Sabbath . . . of perpetual obligation," appears also in the Articles of Faith of the Congregational Association of Chicago. Unpublished "Records of the Congregational Association of Chicago," 1852-79 (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary), 5-6.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 8-9.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 18.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 30, 31.
- 10 Asa Mahan, *Scripture Doctrine of Christian Perfection* (1839), 13.
- 11 Unpublished "Minutes," I, 16, 17.
- 12 *Ibid.*, I, 24-26.
- 13 Unpublished "Minutes of the Illinois Association of Congregational Churches," 1834-58, Session of 1846. (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary.)
- 14 C. H. Rammelkamp, *Illinois College, A Centennial History, 1829-1929* (New Haven, 1928), 129.
- 15 Unpublished "Minutes of the Illinois Association," 1834-58, meeting of April 12, 1845.
- 16 Rammelkamp, *Illinois College*, 125.
- 17 "Minutes of the Illinois Association," in *loco cit.*
- 18 J. M. Sturtevant, *An Autobiography* (New York, 1896), 258.
- 19 "Minutes of the Illinois Association," I, 45-46.
- 20 *Minutes of the General Association, 1856* (Peoria, 1856), statistical tables. In the "Narrative" (14) it is asserted that the membership of the Central Association is 3000. The itemized statistics do not bear it out.
- 21 Frederick I. Kuhns, "Rock River Congregational Association," 18. An unpublished manuscript in the Hammond Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary.
- 22 Unpublished "Minutes of the Geneseo Congregational Association,"

- 1851-67, 19. (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary.)
- 23 Quoted in A. C. Cole, *The Era of the Civil War, 1848-1873* (*The Centennial History of Illinois*, III, Springfield, 1919), 6, n. 12.
- 24 *Manual of the Fox River Association* (Ottawa, 1890), 8.
- 25 Caleb Frank Gates, *A Christian Business Man; Biography of Deacon C. F. Gates* (Boston and Chicago, 1892), 69.
- 26 A broadside entitled "Brief Statement of Facts," printed in May, 1851. Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary; cf. also Joseph E. Roy, "Congregationalism in Illinois," in *Illinois Society of Church History* (Chicago, 1895), 52; Cole, *The Era of the Civil War*, 221-222.
- 27 "Brief Statement of Facts"; also newspaper clippings sent by Philo Carpenter to the Secretaries of the A.H.M.S. with a covering letter dated May 30, 1851 (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary).
- 28 Lawrence E. Murphy, *Religion and Education on the Frontier, A Life of Stephen Peet* (Dubuque, Iowa, 1942), 124-126.
- 29 Letter to Dr. Badger, dated July 31, 1851 (A.H.M.S. Collection).
- 30 *The Quarter Centennial of the First Congregational Church of Chicago* (Chicago, 1876), 8.
- 31 *Congregational Herald*, October 25, 1855, and January 13, 1859.
- 32 *Ibid.*, April 16, 1853.
- 33 Unpublished "Records of the Congregational Association of Chicago, 1852-1879," 14. (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary.)
- 34 *Congregational Herald*, April 16, 1853.
- 35 This is based on the incontrovertible evidence of the original minutes of the Meeting ("Records," 15), recorded by the Reverend J. M. Williams, scribe. How the same gentleman could assert in 1878, that two Chicago churches also had joined at the first meeting we gladly leave to him to explain. Cf. his "History of the Chicago Congregational Association during its first Quarter Century," *Illinois Society of Church History*, 88.
- 36 "Records," 24.
- 37 *The Christian Era* (Galesburg, Illinois) I (February, 1851), No. 5.
- 38 *Congregational Herald*, July 29, 1853.
- 39 *Ibid.*, November 18, 1856.
- 40 Cf. Murphy, *Religion and Education on the Frontier*, 119 ff.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 120-21.
- 42 An article in *The Prairie Herald*, May 22, 1850.
- 43 G.S.F. Savage, "A Chapter of the Early History of the Chicago Theological Seminary," in *Illinois Society of Church History*, 15.
- 44 *Congregational Herald*, September 23, 1853.
- 45 *Ibid.*, June 18, 1853.
- 46 G. S. F. Savage, "The Genesis and Early History of the Chicago Theological Seminary," in *Historical Addresses—First Congregational Church* (Chicago, 1908), 55; also a description of the same event by President Franklin D. Fisk, in *Fiftieth Anniversary of the Organization of the General Association of Illinois* (1844-1894), 40.
- 47 Peet's letter to the secretary of the A.H.M.S., dated July 25, 1854. (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary.)

- 48 G. S. L. Savage, "Early History of the Chicago Theological Seminary," *Illinois Society of Church History*, 15.
- 49 *The Advance* (1900), 708.
- 50 Savage, "Early History of the Chicago Theological Seminary," 21. This report cannot be corroborated from source materials, for the records of the Seminary were lost in the fire of 1871. *Congregational Herald* (June 3, 1858) published the first report of the Board of Directors, which announced pledges totaling \$150,640, and the appointment of the three professors, without mentioning the year of their election.
- 51 *Congregational Herald*, February 10, 1859.
- 52 *The Advance* (1900), 708-709.
- 53 J. E. Roy, *Pilgrim's Letters* (Boston and Chicago, 1888), 33.
- 54 Unpublished "Minutes of the Illinois Association," 1859-1904, October, 1861.
- 55 From an incomplete, unpublished MS. of the "History of the Chicago Theological Seminary," written by President O. S. Davis.
- 56 *The Advance* (1900), 708-709.
- 57 Unpublished "Records of the Western Education Society," (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary), 27.
- 58 A. C. Cole, *The Era of the Civil War*, 2.
- 59 Cf. *Minutes* for 1860, 18.
- 60 *Congregational Herald*, March 14, 1859.
- 61 *Ibid.*, June 10, 1858.
- 62 Unpublished "Records of the Bureau Congregational Association," I, 1-4. (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary.)
- 63 Bascom, "Congregationalism in Illinois," 7.
- 64 Quoted in E. M. Poggi, *The Prairie Province of Illinois* (Urbana, 1934), 100.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 101.
- 66 *Congregational Herald*, May 10, 1855.
- 67 *Minutes of the General Association*, 1858, 14; reports of many ministers commissioned by the A.H.M.S. could likewise be cited, as for instance, from the Reverend T. H. Johnson of LaHarpe to Dr. Badger, dated January 20, 1858. A.H.M.S. Collection.
- 68 Asa Turner of the "Yale Band of 1829" fame, who was elected one of the vice-presidents of the Convention saw to it that the Easterners would see the light!
- 69 *Advance*, xlviii (1904), 332.
- 70 *Congregational Herald*, June 19, 1856.
- 71 *Ibid.*, September 23, 1853.
- 72 *Ibid.*, November 6, 1856.
- 73 The Morgan Conference adopted a Memorial in 1854 urging that the General Association of Illinois raise a new fund, and pointing out that if only one hundred churches in the state were to tax themselves to the extent of ten dollars a year, the result would greatly stimulate the founding of new churches. Unpublished Minutes, 1851-1881, p. 27.
- 74 The Rev. E. Jenney, of Waverly, Ill., an evangelist within the bounds of the Alton Presbytery, writing to Dr. Badger in regard to

- the organization of a separate missionary work within the bound of the Presbytery of Illinois, calls it "that great abomination of the age." Letter dated September 16, 1858, in the A.H.M.S. Collection. Mr. Jenney was offered a position as missionary under the Alton Presbytery, but declined "because, in my view, the work they contemplated, was extremely sectarian and devisive." *Ibid.*, letter of December, 1858.
- 75 An unpublished study of H. W. Ripley, "Sketch of the History of the American Home Missionary Society," 1862, p. 70ff. (a copy in the library of the C.T.S.).
- 76 *Ibid.*, 77.
- 77 Unpublished "Records," 63.
- 78 *Minutes of the Illinois Association*, 1869, 24.
- 79 A statement of Dr. Joseph E. Roy in *Quarter-Centennial of the First Congregational Church* (Chicago, 1896), 61.
- 80 Unpublished "Minutes of the Geneseo Association," 1851-67, I, 104-5. (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary.)
- 81 *Fiftieth Anniversary of the First Congregational Church* (Princeton), 28.
- 82 Roy, *Pilgrim's Letters*, 24-25.
- 83 *Ibid.*, 30.
- 84 *Ibid.*, footnote 1.
- 85 Cf. William E. Barton, *President Lincoln* (Indianapolis, 1933), 453-61.
- 86 A letter of Rev. S. T. Babbitt, Barry, Ill., to Dr. Badger, dated June 3, 1859. A.H.M.S. Collection.
- 87 Unpublished "Minutes," 1851-67, l. c. for 1852, p. 33.
- 88 *Congregational Herald*, July 8, 1853.
- 89 *Minutes of the Illinois Association*, 1869, 36.
- 90 *Semi-Centennial Celebration of the Organization of the First Congregational Church of Moline, Ill.* (Moline, 1894), 15.
- 91 *Fiftieth Anniversary of the First Congregational Church, Princeton, Ill.* (Princeton, 1881), 16-17.
- 92 Unpublished "Minutes," I, 70, 98.
- 93 *Ibid.*, 120.
- 94 *Ibid.*, I, 182.
- 95 Dr. Duffield wrote: "Nor is it to be concealed, that serious distrust has of late years begun to be felt among the Presbyterians, in relation: first, to the soundness in the faith, or the orthodoxy and attachment to the Calvinistic system of doctrine, on the part of not a few Congregational ministers; and second, to the competency of Congregational appliances, usages, and capability, to administer the discipline necessary to correct error, and to promote the love of truth and purity of conduct. Credentials from Congregational bodies by no means now possess the same claims to respect they once did. It is another gospel, different from that which our Presbyterian ministers generally, and the Congregational ministry of New England of the former generation especially, have been accustomed to teach,

- which is not infrequently of late years heard from some of the Congregational order." Quoted from *The New York Evangelist* by *Congregational Herald*, Nov. 6, 1856; cf. also the article of L. G. Vander Velde, "The Synod of Michigan and Movements for Social Reform, 1834-1869," in *Church History*, V (1936), 59ff.
- 96 *Congregational Herald*, June 24, 1858.
- 97 "Records," 5-6.
- 98 "A Confession of Faith," *Congregational Herald*, April 28, 1859.
- 99 *Minutes of the Elgin Association*, October 25, 1853, published in *Congregational Herald*, November 11, 1853.
- 100 *Congregational Herald*, April 21, 1859.
- 101 J. Merle Davis, *Davis—Soldier Missionary* (Boston, 1916), 13.
- 102 Unpublished "Minutes of the Illinois Association," 1859-1904, p. 10.
- 103 Unpublished "Minutes of the Central East Association," May 9, 1863.
- 104 Unpublished "Minutes of the Morgan Conference," 1851-1881, pp. 75, 81, 82.
- 105 Unpublished "Records of the Orthodox Congregational Church of Cambridge, Ill.," 36-37. (Library of the C. T. S.)
- 106 *Ibid.*, 43.
- 107 *Semi-Centennial Celebration of the First Congregational Church of Aurora, Illinois* (Aurora, Ill. 1888), 177.
- 108 Gordon S. P. Kleeberg, *The Formation of the Republican Party as a National Political Organization* (New York, 1911), 14ff.
- 109 Cole, *The Era of the Civil War*, 128, 150. This was reported by C. T. Douglas, who himself attended the meeting.
- 110 Unpublished "Minutes of the Illinois Association," 1859-1904, the session Oct. 22, 1863.
- 111 Letter to Dr. Badger, February 25, 1862. A.H.M.S. Collection.
- 112 Letter to Dr. Badger, December 5, 1862, A.H.M.S. Collection.
- 113 Roy, *Pilgrim Letters*, 56, 72-73.

CHAPTER V

- 1 Already in 1837 the slavery issue was a factor in causing the Old School Presbyterian General Assembly to cut itself off from Congregationalists and to expel those presbyteries and synods which insisted on close affiliation with the Congregationalists.
- 2 Long was one of the original trustees of Monticello Seminary. He later settled in Galena. His formal connections with the Presbyterian denomination were broken in 1862 when he united with the Congregational Society in Galena, formed the preceding year, mainly by seceders from the Presbyterians.
- 3 Such as the family of Samuel H. Davis, who as printers and journalists did much for the cause, first in Peoria, then in Galesburg, and

- later in other parts of the country. James Scott Davis, the Congregationalist minister to whom reference is made later, was a son.
- 4 The Convention was to meet at Peoria, November 21, 1850. The move had been discussed by Bascom and Blanchard a year before, and the latter corresponded with several persons about it. Blanchard advertised his endorsement by an article in the *Western Citizen*, which emphasized the need for freeing Presbyterians from their slavery associations.
 - 5 This movement was already well under way in the state of Illinois, where as early as 1846 a Christian Anti-Slavery Convention met at Granville. Eventually, this seems to have developed into what was hoped would be a permanent institution. In May, 1850, a similar meeting was held at Ottawa, Illinois. Apparently under a constitution adopted at the Ottawa convention, there met at Granville in January, 1851, the "First Semi-Annual Meeting" of the Anti-Slavery Christian Convention of Illinois.
 - 6 At least one of the others was a Congregational layman.

CHAPTER VI

- 1 For the general setting, the author has depended on the standard social histories, national, state, and local. Frequent use has been made of accredited special works on topics such as labor and immigration. The material dealing particularly with Illinois Congregationalism derived from research largely in the official records of the State Association and in the weekly files of the *Advance*. Where important use was made of monographs on church history, the indebtedness is indicated by annotations.
- 2 The generalizations from such figures are made as suggestions only; the larger number of women in 1880 was partly the result, perhaps, of the changed ratio of sexes after the frontier stage of a community was passed. A complicating factor also was the alteration of the sex ratio that occurred with urbanization.
- 3 For the data in this paragraph the author is indebted to a dissertation, "History of Illinois Congregationalism," by Chester C. Brown, submitted to the Chicago Theological Seminary, June, 1943.
- 4 Carl E. Schneider, *The German Church on the American Frontier A Study in the Rise of Religion among the Germans of the West Based on the History of the Evangelischer Kirchenverein des Westens* (St. Louis, 1939), 215.
- 5 George M. Stephenson, *The Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration. A Study of Immigrant Churches* (University of Minnesota Press, 1952), 177.

CHAPTER VIII

- 1 Milo T. Morrill, *A History of the Christian Denomination in America, 1794-1911* (Dayton, O., 1912); John Vant Stephens, *The New Lights (The Christian Church)* (Cincinnati, O., 1942); Simon A. Bennett, *The Christian Denomination and Christian Doctrine* (Dayton, O., n. d.); and Charles C. Ware, *Barton Warren Stone* (St. Louis, Mo., 1932).
- 2 Shirley E. Greene, An unpublished study, "Indiana and Illinois."
- 3 Morrill, *The Christian Denomination*, 62 ff.; cf. also Winfred E. Garrison, *Religion Follows the Frontier* (New York, 1931), 62-63.
- 4 Quoted in Ware, *Barton Warren Stone*, 244.
- 5 I am relying for this information on a pamphlet of E. M. Williams, *The Biblical Dialogues in the Christian Record* (Carbondale, Ill., 1927); but its reliability cannot be guaranteed.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 5.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 7.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 10.
- 9 Ware, *Barton Warren Stone*, 297.
- 10 Morrill, *The Christian Denomination*, 383-84, 387-88.
- 11 Unpublished "Minutes of the Illinois State Christian Conference," 13 ff. (CTS Library.)
- 12 *Ibid.*, 36.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 44.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 173.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 171.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 179.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 141.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 208.
- 19 The statistics are taken from charts prepared by the Rev. Shirley E. Greene.
- 20 Minutes of the Illinois State Christian Conference, 395-96.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 399.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 401.

CHAPTER IX

- 1 The detailed record of the organization and membership of the Chicago Congregational Union as it exists in 1943 will be found in the third section of this chapter.
- 2 To these have been added recently an Extension Committee, and a Post-War Commission.
- 3 To this group of committees there has recently been added the Promotional Committee on Missionary Apportionment of the Greater Chicago area.
- 4 From this point, the name "Chicago Congregational Union" will be used in this chapter.

CHAPTER X

- 1 Most of the factual and statistical material here summarized is based upon the unpublished studies prepared by the Department of Research and Survey of the Chicago Congregational Union, under the leadership of Professors A. E. Holt and S. C. Kincheloe.
- 2 Unpublished "Records of the Congregational Association of Chicago," May 14, 1867.
- 3 George J. Eisenach, *A History of the German Congregational Churches in the United States* (Yankton, S. D., 1938), 83.
- 4 "A Fifty-year Backward Glance," in *Advance* (May 1, 1942), 212.
- 5 James Denney, *Studies in Theology* (3rd ed., New York, 1895).
- 6 *Ibid.*, 83.
- 7 *The Advance*, XL (1900), 505.
- 8 This was probably based on his discussion of such passages as "come from God," "come from heaven," found in *The Revelation of Jesus* (New York, 1899), 708ff. These passages really do not so much deny the doctrine of the pre-existence as affirm that Jesus did not teach it.
- 9 *Minutes of the Fifteenth Triennial Convention* (Chicago, 1900), 19.
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 *The Advance*, XLI (1901), 668-69.
- 12 *Ibid.*, XLVII (1904), 428.
- 13 William E. Barton, "The Origin of the Council Creed," *The Advance* LXVII (1915), 985-6, 1022-23, 1055-56, 1088-89, 1120-21, 1152-53, 1254-55, 1287-88.
- 14 *Autobiography of William E. Barton* (Indianapolis, 1932), 305.
- 15 *Minutes of the Congregational Conference of Illinois* (1905), 22-23.
- 16 *Ibid.*, (1917), 23.
- 17 Unpublished "Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Conference," March 6, 1911; see also the unpublished "Records of the Illinois Home Missionary Society" for the meeting of May 16, 1911 (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary).
- 18 *Minutes of the Congregational Conference of Illinois* (1913), 42.
- 19 *Ibid.*, (1912), 54.
- 20 This and the preceding paragraph are only slightly modified versions of the draft contributed by the Rev. C. A. Osborne.
- 21 G. G. Atkins and F. L. Fagley, *A History of American Congregationalism* (Boston, 1942), 257.
- 22 This paragraph and the preceding one were supplied by the Rev. C. A. Osborne.
- 23 *Minutes of the Congregational Conference of Illinois* (1902), 22.
- 24 From the unpublished material prepared by President Ozora S. Davis for a history of the Seminary (Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary).
- 25 *The Advance*, LII (1906), 171, 176.
- 26 Mark Sullivan, *Our Times* (New York, London, 1933), V, 178 ff.
- 27 *The Advance* (1916), 487-88.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 585, 776 ff, 1155 ff.

- 29 "The Congregationalists in the War," in the Library of the Chicago Theological Seminary.
- 30 *Minutes of the Congregational Conference of Illinois* (1917), 67; (1918), 58.
- 31 For a fuller statement, see Cyrus A. Osborne, *A Catechism in Congregational Polity* (Chicago Congregational Association, 1937); the author of the "Catechism" also supplied the above paragraph, as well as the next one.
- 32 Unpublished "Minutes of the Central Association of Congregational Churches," 1899-1920, 198-9.
- 33 Unpublished "Minutes of the Bureau Congregational Association," 1907-1925, 298.
- 34 *The Pilgrim Outlook*, IV (December, 1926), II.
- 35 Unpublished "Minutes of the Board of Trustees," January 26, 1927.
- 36 Unpublished "Minutes of the Conference" (1931).
- 37 *Constitution of the Chicago Congregational Association* (1930) Art. VII, 4-7; in the revised Constitution of 1940, this article remains essentially unchanged. Cf. also *Constitution of the Chicago Congregational Union*, Art. VI. Much of the material for the treatment of this subject was supplied by the Rev. C. A. Osborne.
- 38 *Minutes of the Congregational Conference of Illinois* (1919), 51.
- 39 *Ibid.*, (1926), 60-71.
- 40 The treatment of the subject of the Union Theological College reproduces almost *verbatim* Dean C. A. Osborne's draft.
- 41 The entire account reproduces to a large extent Dean Osborne's report, and is based on documents in his possession.
- 42 *Minutes* (Gray Book, 1935), 19.
- 43 *Minutes of the Congregational Conference of Illinois*, (1934), 15, 19-20.
- 44 *Ibid.*, (1936), 21.
- 45 *Ibid.*, (1937), 18.
- 46 *Ibid.*, (1938), 20.
- 47 *Ibid.*, (1941), 22.
- 48 T. F. Rutledge Beale, *Dangers the Church Faces in a World at War* (Congregational and Christian Conference of Illinois, 1941), 14.

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N. B. The contents of the footnotes have not been indexed.

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